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WANDERINGS IN CHINA



Yours very truly

Constance F. Eka Gordon Cumming

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY W. CROOKE 103 PRINCES ST EDINBURGH.

SUFFERINGS IN CHINA

NEW

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND
EDINBURGH AND LONDON
MDCCCLXXXVIII

677

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Constance F. Gordon Cumming

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY W. CROOKE 103 PRINCES ST. EDINBURGH.

WANDERINGS IN CHINA

BY

C. F. GORDON CUMMING

AUTHOR OF

'AT HOME IN FIJI,' 'A LADY'S CRUISE IN A FRENCH MAN-OF-WAR,'
'FIRE FOUNTAINS OF THE SANDWICH ISLES,'
'GRANITE CRAGS OF CALIFORNIA,' 'IN THE HIMALAYAS AND ON INDIAN PLAINS,'
'IN THE HEBRIDES,' 'VIA CORNWALL TO EGYPT'

ILLUSTRATED BY THE AUTHOR

NEW EDITION

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS
EDINBURGH AND LONDON
MDCCCLXXXVIII

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WANDERINGS IN CHINA.

CHAPTER I.

A MEMORABLE CHRISTMAS.

A glimpse of Shanghai — On board the Pei-ho — "Earth-laden waters"— Hong-Kong—A beautiful city—Christmas-day—Cathedral service—Walk through the city—A hospitable welcome—A terrible conflagration.

ON BOARD THE PEI-HO, MESSAGERIES MARITIMES,
NEARING HONG-KONG,
Christmas-Eve, 1878.

You will wonder when you receive this letter posted in Hong-Kong, where I hope to arrive to-morrow!

It is not that my four months in Japan have by any means exhausted its fascination,—on the contrary, I purpose returning there in spring, when the double cherry-blossoms are in their glory; but meanwhile the hills are white with snow, and I have been nearly frozen, living in paper houses, without fires—only such warmth as we could extract from ornamental little charcoal braziers. So I have fled southward with the swallows, and sailed from Nagasaki, intending to spend Christmas at Shanghai. There, however, I only stayed three days, for the horrid river of yellow mud and the hideousness of the flat country round, and, above all, notwithstanding the genuine kindness of several residents, the oppressive dreariness of finding myself alone in a great dull hotel, where there was not a creature to be seen except Chinese servants, depressed me to such a pitch, that I resolved to risk spending Christmas-day at sea rather than remain there.

Besides, Hong-Kong lies about nine hundred miles farther south, which means journeying towards warmth and sunlight, and of course mid-winter is the very best time to arrive there, whereas even at Shanghai it was cold, and seemed quite in keeping with the real holly, stag's-horn moss, &c. (all brought from afar), with which the ladies of the congregation were preparing to decorate the cathedral. This is by far the finest Christian church I have seen in any Eastern land, and would of itself have been a very strong inducement to remain for its Christmas services. It is a large red brick building, cruciform, and very lofty, with well-proportioned short transept and good glass, the reredos simple, but all harmonious. The design is Gilbert Scott's; but the whole creation of the building—the choir, and all that combines to produce so excellent a whole—is the work of Dean Butcher, a man greatly beloved by all classes of the community, and to whose personal influence alone is attributed the existence of a church so very superior to those of other English settlements. The services are in every detail those of a very well-appointed church in England.

The American Episcopal chapel for the Chinese was also in full course of decoration by Chinese women, and seemed to me almost the only clean spot in the foully filthy, old, native walled city, in which I spent two afternoons, under the kind escort of old residents. I confess that, notwithstanding all testimony on that point, the reality of its filth quite surpassed my worst expectations! Never could I have conceived the possibility of such varied combinations of bad smells! and even the eye remains unsatisfied, for the streets are all narrow and crowded; and though the multitude of quaint figures, open shops, strange sign-boards, and occasional curly roofs cannot but be somewhat picturesque, the marvel is that they produce so little effect. Even the temples are mean and disgusting — a marvellous contrast to those of clean, delightful Japan.

Dirt—foulest dirt—is the one impression which remains indelibly stamped on my mind: however, as I shall have to return to Shanghai later, I may possibly see it in a rosier tone. Much as I generally delight in oriental cities, I felt it a relief to pass from this one, back to the handsome European settlement of large clean houses, of which a most imposing row stretch along the embankment of the fine crescent-shaped harbour. I confess I do not envy the 125,000 persons who are crowded inside the walls of that native city![1]

[1] The total population of Shanghai is estimated at 156,000. In addition to the

Nor do I envy the Europeans who have to keep themselves alive by a weekly or bi-weekly paper-chase across the dreary level waste which lies beyond the city! And yet I believe that, on account of its social advantages, and also the good sport (chiefly in the way of pheasant-shooting), which is to be had within a moderate distance, Shanghai is the favourite station in China.

For my own part, I was glad to be afloat again, even on the turbid yellow waters of the dirty Woo-Sung river, though we seemed literally to be ploughing through liquid yellow mud, till we had passed the new Woo-Sung Fort—in other words, the junction of the tributary stream with the great Yang-tse-Kiang, which, although at all times emphatically a Yellow River, had been less affected by local causes; and so when we reached the mouth of the river, which is fully twelve miles in width, the mud was so far diluted that the waters were only of a yellowish grey, and by the time we were fairly afloat on the "Hoang-Ho,"—*i.e.*, the Yellow Sea,—we rejoiced to find ourselves on a clear ocean changing from blue to green.

But we fully realised how well this sea might deserve its name, when after prolonged rains the flooded Yang-tse (which ranks third of the world's greatest rivers) pours down its vast volume of earth-laden waters (accumulated in its long and busy life-journey of 3000 miles, from its crystalline source amid the mountains of Thibet) to discolour the ocean for a distance of 200 miles or more. Still more must this have been the case when the real Yellow River, the Hoang-Ho, emptied itself into this sea, only about 150 miles to the north of the Yang-tse, instead of, as now, flowing north into the Gulf of Peh-chi-li, a change of course which was a freak of quite recent years.

Now the repellent yellow mud lies far behind us, and we are steaming swiftly south, but as yet there is no sensible improvement in climate. On the contrary, we all feel it intensely cold, and are sitting with our warm wraps on, huddled round two wretched stoves in the large, dark, uncomfortable cabin, which at night is dimly lighted only by a few candles,—no lamps! Altogether it is a dreary ship, quite unlike my previous experience of "Messageries" vessels.

above, the boat population is reckoned at 11,000, while foreigners and their retainers muster 73,000 in the English settlement, 22,500 in Hong-Kew, and 50,000 in the French settlement.

Note—"EARTH-LADEN WATERS."—These Chinese rivers deposit such quantities of soil, that they are continually raising their channels higher and higher above the level of the surrounding plain; consequently it is not only necessary to construct stupendous embankments to keep the water-floods in their self-chosen beds, but also to continue ceaselessly raising and strengthening them. These cyclopean banks of mud, or of basket-work full of small boulders and faced with brick and stone, extend for hundreds of miles, and at some points are so high that to reach the summit one has to ascend sixty or seventy granite steps, above the level of the boundless plain, to find one's self standing on the brink of a swift mighty river, perhaps half a mile in width. Such banks have to be built so as to allow for the river's natural rise of fully 20 feet in the rainy season.

It is evident that only by ceaseless vigilance can these enormous earthworks be kept in thorough repair, and Government officials are enjoined to bestow the utmost attention to this subject. Needful repairs are executed in winter and spring, when the waters are at the lowest, and enormous sums are thus expended even in ordinary years.

But no amount of human care can always avail against the might of such a stream as the Great Yellow River, when, in autumn, it pours down from the mountains with about ten times its winter volume, flowing rapidly for a distance of about 2000 miles, its waters charged with sand and yellow earth, which it deposits all along its course, raising its bed and forming shallows, till at length the flood either overflows the channel or forces a passage through embankments, soddened by weeks of rain. Then follow appalling inundations, transforming whole counties into gigantic lakes, drowning all living creatures, and covering the land with a deposit which, for one season at least, is fatal to all agriculture, and often leaves great tracts transformed into feverish swamps.

When the waters subside, the river is certain to create for itself a totally new channel, so a legion of workers must immediately construct new embankments, which, like those now abandoned by the stream, must be heightened year by year, as the deposit of silt raises the river-bed. Nine distinct channels have thus been occupied by this fickle stream within the last 2500 years; but for the five centuries prior to 1852 the Hoang-Ho proved wonderfully constant to the course it had last selected, pouring its waters into those of the Yellow Sea about 150 miles to the north of Shanghai.

The present generation has, however, had full experience of the

erratic tendencies of these unstable waters, for in 1852 they suddenly burst the northern bank near the city of Kaifung, about 250 miles inland, flooding the country, and spreading ruin and desolation as they swept onward in a north-easterly direction, their course being guided by the rocky range which borders the huge promontory dividing the Yellow Sea from the Gulf of Peh-chi-li. Thus the river was compelled to flow northward till it reached the latter sea, at a distance of fully 500 miles from its old mouth, leaving its former bed a level plain of dust, only to be fertilised by toilsome irrigation.

Strange to say, so little did foreigners even then know of anything that occurred beyond the limits of the treaty ports, that five years elapsed ere the Europeans living in Shanghai had any inkling of the tremendous catastrophe which had occurred scarcely so far from their homes as Edinburgh is from London ! Two years later, though it was then known beyond a doubt that the great river had vanished from its accustomed bed, no foreigners knew what had become of it !

One thing we do now know—namely, that although the stream has for the last thirty years traversed the very same part of the country as it did 500 years previously, yet it nowhere flows in exactly the same channel, where the strong ready-made embankments would have been so helpful. It selected for its bed the channel of a much smaller stream, and only by the construction of stupendous new embankments have these turbulent vagrant waters been prevented from overflowing their boundaries at every rainy season. Notwithstanding all vigilance, they have repeatedly burst these banks, flooding large tracts of country and drowning the luckless cultivators.

In 1885, "China's Sorrow" (as this Bohemian river is poetically called) inundated a large tract of the province of Shansi, destroying two important towns, and occasioning great loss of life. But this was as nothing compared with its playful freaks in the autumn of 1887, when prolonged rains had so swollen the waters that the embanked portion resembled a gigantic reservoir, 500 miles in length and about one in width. This raging river, driven by a fierce wind, and rushing down at headlong speed, bore with unwonted violence against a bend in the embankment, forty miles to the west of Kaifung, which was the scene of the disaster in 1852.

At last, on the night of September 28, a breach was effected, and then, with awful resistless rush, the escaped torrent poured forth in a deluge, forming a mass of water about 20 feet deep in the centre and about 30 miles wide, and thus overswept the province of Honan (which, by reason of its fertility and admirable

cultivation, is commonly called "The Garden of China"), flooding an area of about 10,000 square miles. In other words, a densely-peopled plain about half the size of Scotland, dotted over with about three thousand large villages and cities, inhabited by millions of the most industrious people on the face of the earth, was suddenly overwhelmed by this awful flood and transformed into a raging sea.

Imagination can scarcely picture a scene so appalling—the great peaceful plain where at eventide several millions of prosperous people lay down to rest in safety and comfort, without one thought of danger, only to be awakened by the crashing of falling walls and houses collapsing on every side, and the deafening roar as the wild flood of raging waters, rushing on through the darkness of night, overwhelmed one city or village after another.

When morning broke, in place of a vast expanse of richly cultivated fields, there was only to be seen a boundless waste of surging waters, sportively tossing thousands of corpses of men, women, and children, buffaloes, oxen, and other animals, together with wreckage of every description. The three thousand villages lay buried—some 10, some 30 feet—beneath the waters, and of their inhabitants, incalculable multitudes must have found a grave beneath their own roofs. In China it is almost impossible to obtain anything like definite statistics on such subjects, but it is generally believed that at least two million persons perished on that dread night.

As an example of the danger incurred even by those who are awake and on guard, I may mention that some days later, when all hands were summoned to endeavour to construct a breakwater to arrest the further progress of the flood, it sportively *swept away four thousand* of these vigilant workmen.

For several months the immense volume of the waters of the Great Yellow River continued to pour down from the mountains on to the inhabited lands, ever enlarging the boundaries of the re-created great inland sea, which has thus once more reclaimed the lands drained by the Emperor Yii. (He receives divine honours as the mightiest of engineers, because it is believed that prior to his reign, the whole province of Honan was a vast lake, covering an area of 65,000 square miles, till he devised means for the construction of such stupendous embankments that the waters of the Hoang-Ho were therein captured, and this most fertile province was created.) Whether the river will again submit to imprisonment, and to be once more guided to that Yellow Sea which it forsook in 1852, is a problem still unsolved.

CARE OF MRS SNOWDEN, CITY OF VICTORIA,
ISLE OF HONG-KONG,
Christmas-Day.

Certainly fortune has favoured me, for we reached this most lovely city early this morning, and have had a most enjoyable Christmas-day. I had not the remotest conception that I was coming to anything so beautiful; so, when with the earliest light of dawn, we slowly—very slowly—steamed into this exquisite harbour, its beauty, so suddenly revealed, left me mute with delight. Perhaps the contrast between these encircling ranges of shapely hills and the dead level of the Shanghai coast, help to make these seem more impressive. Certainly I have seen no harbour to compare with this, though I suppose Rio Janeiro claims the palm of beauty above all others.

This is like a great inland lake, so entirely do the jagged mountain-ranges of the mainland and the island of Kowlung seem to close around this rocky isle, whose great city bears the name of England's Queen, and from whose crowning peak floats the union-jack. The said peak is really only 1825 feet in height. Though it looks so imposing, it is simply the termination of the ridge which forms the backbone of the isle, and along whose base extends the city—a granite city, hewn from the granite mountains, with granite fortifications, granite drains to provide for the rush of the summer rains; everything seems to be granitic, but yet there is nothing cold in its appearance, for all is gilded by the mellow sunlight. All the principal houses have lovely shrubberies, with fine ornamental trees, which soften the effect, and make each terraced road seem delightful.

There is so very little, if any, level ground, save what has been reclaimed artificially, that steep streets of stairs lead from the business quarters on the sea embankment, right up the face of the hill, the lower spurs of which are all dotted over with most luxurious houses and shady gardens, now gay with camellias and roses and scarlet poinsettias. And in the midst of it all is the loveliest Botanical Garden, beautifully laid out, and where all rich and rare forms of foliage, from tropical or temperate climes, combine to produce a garden of delight, whence you look down upon the emerald green and dazzling blue of this beautiful harbour, where a thousand vessels, and boats and junks without number, can ride in absolute safety.

I had a glimpse of it all this afternoon, but indeed it would be difficult to obtain a more entrancing view than from this house

itself, which really belongs to Sir John Small, the Chief-Justice,[1] but, in his absence, is tenanted by Mr Snowden, the acting Chief-Justice, who, on the strength of a letter from Sir Harry Parkes (one of the many acts of kindness for which I am indebted to him), came to offer me a welcome to Hong-Kong and to this lovely home.

But I must tell you first of our arrival. My fellow-passenger from Japan, Miss Shervinton, had come to rejoin her father, and we waited a little while expecting to see him appear. But being impatient to get ashore, we chartered a sampan—*i.e.*, a covered boat, inhabited by a whole Chinese family, consisting of a long-tailed father, four funny little children, and a comely mother, with beautifully dressed glossy hair, a comfortable blouse, and very loose short trousers, showing neat firm feet and ankles. Not having previously been in a sampan, I was glad to begin the day with a new experience!

We met Colonel Shervinton almost as soon as we landed, and we all went together to breakfast at the principal hotel, and thence to the cathedral, which, though not to be compared in beauty with that at Shanghai, is a fine roomy church. There is a surpliced choir, but the Christmas decorations are of a severe type, being confined to flowers in pots on the chancel-steps and round the font. A full congregation, and a nice hearty service, with sermon by Bishop Burdon (the bishop of this diocese of Victoria), who, though still in the prime of life, is the fortunate possessor of such snow-white locks and beard as must surely be accounted a special episcopal endowment in a land where even grey hair commands such special honour as in China!

We returned to the hotel for luncheon, immediately after which, in prompt answer to letters from various friends in Japan, came several most kind residents, inviting me to their homes. Fortunately for me, the first to arrive was Mr Snowden (fortunately, I mean, because this house is so beautifully situated some way up the hill, overlooking the whole town and harbour, whereas the other quarters, so cordially offered to me, lay in the town itself).

Having despatched my luggage, Mr Snowden took me for a

[1] In case the address at the head of this letter should appear needlessly elaborate, I may quote a little conversation which I overheard soon after my return to England. Said a young barrister to the wife of an English M.P.,—"Didn't Miss G. C. say she was staying with the Chief-Justice of Hong-Kong? How do we come to have a Chief-Justice there? Isn't it somewhere in Japan?"

Said the lady,—"Well, really I never thought about it before, though we have relations there. But now you come to mention it, I think you are right"!

turn through the crowded business parts of the city—the Chinese and the Portuguese quarters—all built in terraces along horizontal streets, but connected one with another by steep streets of stairs. There is a specially picturesque spot right below this house, where five Chinese and Portuguese streets meet.

From this crowded centre we went on to a very different scene, namely, the beautiful gardens, where we revelled in the fragrance of flowers bathed in sunlight, and as we wandered through shady bamboo-groves, or stood beneath the broad shadow of great banyan-trees, at every turn we caught glimpses of white sails floating on the calm blue harbour far below us, reflecting the cloudless blue of heaven—a scene of most perfect peace, with never a jarring sound to suggest the busy bustling life and all the noise of the city.

In short, I have already seen enough to convince me that it would be difficult to find more fascinating winter-quarters than this oft-abused city. As to climate, although in the same latitude as Calcutta, it is far cooler, and whatever it may be in June or July, to-day it is delicious and balmy, like the sweetest summer day in England; and I am told that this is a fair sample of the whole winter at Hong-Kong, and that for five consecutive months there will probably not be even a shower! Only think what a paradise for an artist! Every day at the same hour the identical lights and shadows, and any number of willing and intelligent coolies ready to fetch and carry him and his goods, and save him all physical fatigue!

We arrived here in time to find Mrs Snowden waiting to welcome me to cosy five-o'clock tea in the pretty English drawing-room. In short, everything is so pleasant that already I have begun to feel myself quite at home in this British isle of Hong-Kong. Now it is time to dress for dinner. Every one here seems to have a dinner-party to-night.

Dec. 27th.

I seem to have lived many days since writing so far. I can hardly realise that it was only the night before last that my impressions of Hong-Kong were all so peaceful and so calm, for ever since we have been surrounded with so wild a turmoil, and a scene of such awful dread, that it feels as if we had been living in a dream.

Surely never before has Christmas so vividly exemplified the familiar words of its church service, which tell of the battle with "burning and fuel of fire"![1]

[1] 1st Lesson for Christmas-day—Isaiah ix. 5.

On Christmas night, just as the guests were preparing to leave at 11 P.M., suddenly a startling sound of sharp clanging rang through the night. The others knew well what it meant, and I was not long left in doubt. It was the fire-alarm! We all ran to the verandah, which, as I have told you, overlooks the whole town and harbour. These lie outspread below, as it were, the base of a great amphitheatre.

We had, a few moments before, been noticing what a calm beautiful scene it was, with its thousand points of gleaming light, the reflections of the glittering stars overhead, blending with those of the vessels floating on the still waters, and all the lights of the city—stationary and locomotive, the latter indicating the paper lanterns carried by all wayfarers and chair-coolies.

Now a new feature was added to the scene. From the very point where the five streets met, rose a tall column of fiery smoke, with shooting tongues of flame. Another moment and the gentlemen had rushed off, some being members of the fire-brigade, and others having a very personal interest in the danger which might so quickly approach their own offices.

The alarm-bells rang on more and more wildly—sharp jangling bells, which once heard could never be forgotten, so unlike any other peal is that affrighted clanging,—no seasonable Christmas chimes, but an awful appeal; a far-reaching sound that should summon all the engines from every corner of the city, and all men enlisted in the brigades, from their festivities. These, as a rule, pride themselves on the extraordinary rapidity with which they respond to such a call, and many a fire has been quenched at the very outset, owing to the velocity with which its first indication has been smothered.

But, of course, on this night everything was a little lax. Many men had been dining with friends at some distance from the city, and it was near midnight ere they could get back. Others returned unsuspectingly to find the awful havoc that had taken place. So the bells tolled on in wild appeal, and those of the Roman Catholic cathedral took up the alarm, while fire-drums beat in the streets to hasten the laggards, and meanwhile the smoke-clouds grew denser and more dense, and, to make matters worse, a sharp breeze sprang up from the north, fanning the flames, and carrying sparks and burning fragments to ignite new buildings at a distance.

There is little doubt that the fire was the work of an incendiary. It began in the store of a small general dealer—an Englishman. He was absent, and when the place was broken open, the whole

was found saturated with kerosene. It is also believed that some men spread the fire to their own stores for the sake of the insurance money. Curiously enough, three fires broke out simultaneously on other parts of the isle; but there really seems to have been no object to make it appear that these were incendiary, as there was no general attempt at looting. On the contrary, every one appeared half stupefied, as the flames rapidly gained the mastery, suddenly bursting from fresh houses here and there, where least suspected, and spreading from street to street.

That livelong night we stood or sat on the verandah watching this appallingly magnificent scene—the flames rising and falling, leaping and dancing, now bursting from some fresh house, shooting up in tongues of fire, now rolling in dense volumes of black smoke. Now it was a paraffin-store which blazed with fierce light, and, a moment later, a New-Year store of fireworks were all aflame, shooting and exploding all on their own account.

From house to house and from street to street the beautiful, terrible Fire Demon swept on its destroying path, for the flames, now fanned by a keen breeze, rushed hungrily on, sometimes sweeping right across a street to devour the opposite houses,—sometimes, for some reason utterly incomprehensible, working right round a block, and leaving one or two houses in the very heart of the conflagration utterly untouched (like the Three Children in the burning fiery furnace).

From our high post we looked down on the awful sea of fire, watching it work onward,—stealing under roofs—lighting in a rain of fire on distant houses where we could see sparks smouldering on some weak corner of a roof or an inflammable verandah: then would come a little puff of smoke, followed by a burst of flame, and then would come another outburst in quite a different part of the town, till so many places were blazing at once, that the firemen were utterly baffled.

Very soon it was evident that neither their numerical strength, their engines, nor their meagre water-supply could possibly master the fire—a very startling revelation to the colony, which prided itself on the perfect organisation of its fire-brigade. Whether the actual water-supply was insufficient, or whether the engines were not sufficiently powerful, seems uncertain; but even when they were got to work, the puny jets failed to reach the top of the loftier houses, and where once the fire had fairly obtained a footing, any attempt at extinguishing it was so obviously hopeless, that the firemen's efforts were chiefly directed to saving the neighbouring or

opposite buildings, by tearing down the verandahs and all the woodwork, and by covering the walls with carpets, curtains, or matting, and endeavouring to keep these saturated.

Among the houses thus saved is the Oriental Bank, in which I take a special interest, because, had Mr Snowden reached me five minutes later this afternoon, I should at this moment have been the guest of Mrs Crombie at the said bank, and instead of being safely housed here (we *believe* this house is now safe!) I should have been sharing her night of awful anxiety. The room which I should have occupied is now saturated with the water-jets thrown on, as a preventive means while houses close by were blazing. *The whole opposite side of the street was burnt*, and only by superhuman efforts was the bank saved, the whole outside being hung as aforesaid, with mats and carpets, which were incessantly pumped upon. Of course preparations for the worst were made, and the wife, and other treasure, were sent to safe quarters on land and sea. I believe that all the banks sent their treasure and valuable papers on board one of the men-of-war lying in harbour.

A large force of blue-jackets and of military came to the assistance of the firemen, and did right hearty work, though perhaps with less success than would have been the case on any other night. Unfortunately many were on leave for their Christmas night, and not only was it difficult to collect these for organised work under any recognised leader, but a considerable number were none the steadier for their Christmas festivities, and so a good deal of British valour was misapplied.

The chief point in which the lack of generalship revealed itself, was when it became evident that the only possible means of staying the progress of the fire lay in blowing up whole blocks of houses, in order to save worse loss. But no one present would take the responsibility of giving the necessary commands.

The Commander of the Forces placed all his men (74th Highlanders and artillerymen) at the disposal of the authorities for this service, and there they stood at ease, waiting for the orders that no one could give; and meanwhile the fire did NOT wait, but swept onward quite unceremoniously, and devoured everything to right and to left. Nothing was safe in any direction, for the breeze varied in the most unaccountable manner, suddenly shifting from north-east round by north to north-west; so while some houses were saved almost miraculously, others that had deemed themselves out of harm's way were suddenly aflame.

At last, after orders and counter-orders had been so freely given

that the willing workers were fairly bewildered, the tardy decision was made, and then a good many houses were blown up every here and there, almost always too late to save those beyond. Besides which, the luckless owners of course tried to save as much of their furniture as possible, so that piles of inflammable stuff (invariably capped with a lot of wicker-chairs !) were heaped up in the streets, forming an excellent lead for the fire, as of course a chance spark almost invariably ignited these heaps.

And so the awful flames gained intensity, and we watched them pass away from the poor densely crowded Chinese town to the larger houses of Portuguese, Parsees, and English. In each by turn we watched first the destruction of pleasant verandahs, then the gutting of the interior, revealed by the flames rushing from every window, and finally with resounding crash the roof would fall in, and from the roaring furnace within, sheets of white or red flame, and lurid smoke of many colours, swept heavenward in awful grandeur.

Although the smoke and the intense colour made it difficult to judge accurately of relative distances, my companions were able in many cases to recognise different houses, and we could plainly discern individuals on the roofs watching for the fall of sparks which they might extinguish ere they did any damage. Oh how tantalising it was sometimes from where we stood, to see sparks fall just beyond their ken, and lie quickly developing, when literally within their reach, could they but have perceived them !

Amongst all the confused noises—the roar of human voices, the yelling and shouting of the Chinese rabble, the crackling and rush of flames, the crash of falling timbers, and the occasional blasting of houses with gunpowder or dynamite—there was one oft-recurring sound which, for a while, puzzled me exceedingly, till I learnt that it was a familiar sound at every Chinese festival, namely, the firing of crackers. Thousands and tens of thousands of these must have gone off. Many doubtless were offered by the frightened people to propitiate the Fire Dragon, but vast numbers were stored ready for the New-Year festival.

There was one moment of gorgeous scenic effect when the flames caught a great timber-merchant's yard, wherein was stored a vast accumulation of seasoned wood and firewood, which of course became a sheet of fire glowing at white heat. You can imagine with what breathless excitement we watched the deadly hard-fought battle betwixt fire and water, in which fire seemed to be getting so entirely the best of it.

For a long time it spread with almost equal strength in two opposite directions; but the wind urged it most fiercely in the direct line of the magnificent houses of the great merchant princes, many of whom (at least the women folk) spent the night in packing such of their most precious valuables as there seemed some chance of saving. It did not take me long to repack mine, and my hostess only collected her chief treasures, as it really seemed hopeless to commence work, with such an accumulation of beautiful curios, and the conviction that if this house did take fire, it would be impossible to get coolies to carry our goods, and indeed, we knew not where to seek safety.

But certainly we were in considerable danger, for the fiery smoke swept right over our heads, and fell in a hail of sparks and blazing fragments all about the place; and at any moment one of these alighting on the woodwork, and there smouldering unnoticed, or else falling on the flimsy Chinese houses just beyond this garden wall, would have placed this house in frightful jeopardy.

Owing to the infatuated delay in not blowing up houses till they were actually on fire, the Civil Hospital was entirely destroyed, though, happily, no lives were lost, the patients being carried to another hospital. There was a time of awful anxiety as the fire swept on directly towards the jail, wherein are stowed five hundred prisoners—scoundrels of the very worst type. A strong military guard were on duty to guard the prison, and remove the prisoners in case of need. Had this become necessary, they had orders to shoot any who attempted to escape, as they would inevitably become leaders of a terrible lot of scoundrels of all sorts who are said to have drifted here, escaping from Canton and other cities where supervision is more rigid, in order to profit by the exceeding leniency of the present Government of Hong-Kong. I am told that they keep the police exceedingly busy, though these number about six hundred, and a very fine body they are. There are three distinct lots of these guardians of the peace, each with a distinctive uniform. There are genuine British "bobbies," Chinamen, and Sikhs—the latter a very picturesque body, with their blue uniform, red turban, and high boots. In addition to all these public servants, every householder of any standing keeps a private patrol to guard his home and his offices.

Very near the jail lies the Roman Catholic cathedral, and this also was in dire jeopardy: in fact, some sparks alighting on the

roof did ignite one corner, which, however, was quickly extinguished by hand service with buckets. No jet from the feeble engines could have reached so high.

Of course the tremendous glare lighted up the great buildings and the mountains all round with a hot red glow, while intervening towers and spires stood out in black relief against the red light, or the cold steely grey of harbour and sky. I never could have conceived a scene so awful and yet so wonderfully beautiful. All night it was like a succession of pictures in the style of Martin's "Destruction of Jerusalem," or "The Last Day." Then morning broke—first a cold grey, just clearing the mountains all round the harbour; and then the rosy dawn, gradually changing to the mellow sunlight, which, while it revealed the full measure of the night's ravages, yet gilded the smoke-clouds, transforming the beautiful fire-illumined darkness into the lovely panorama of yesterday; only in the centre lay a confused mass of dark ruin veiled by filmy blue or white smoke and tremulous mirage of hot air playing above the smouldering ruins, while here and there a denser volume of black wicked smoke indicated where the mischief was still spreading.

It is a frightful confession to make, but any artist will sympathise when I say, that as each picture thus presented seemed more gorgeously effective than the last, I positively again and again found myself forgetting its horror in the ecstasy of its beauty! It really felt as if we were sitting luxuriously in the dress circle watching some wondrous panoramic play, with amazingly realistic scenic effects!

For seventeen hours the fire raged on with unabated might, till it had made a clean sweep of about four hundred houses, covering about ten acres of ground, and leaving thousands of poor creatures homeless.

Even hours after we thought all was safely over, flames suddenly burst from one more large house just beyond the hospital: it was entirely consumed, and the heaps of ruin still smoulder, sending up dense volumes of white smoke, and ready to break out at a thousand spots.

As soon as the fire ceased (which it did apparently simply of its own free will, as both the cathedral and the jail offered an easy prey), Mr Snowden took me down to the town, and we went over a great part of the ruined city, and a truly heartrending sight it was. In every corner of the unburnt streets whole families were

huddled together beside a little pile of the poor household stuff they had succeeded in saving, while the houses, which a few hours before had been happy homes, lay in smouldering ruins. I never could have believed that any community could have borne so awful a calamity so bravely and patiently. Not a murmur was heard; not a tear have I seen shed by women who have lost everything, and crouched, shivering and half dressed, in a really chilling breeze.

But they seem to have a curiously suspicious and by no means flattering feeling towards such kindly Britons as wish to help them, various offers of assistance and loan of blankets having been flatly declined by women whose children were crying with cold.

One very remarkable instance of this is, that the captain of the Perusia, a large vessel now lying in the harbour, offered good quarters to upwards of six hundred of the houseless Chinese sufferers. The offer was made through the Tung Wah Hospital Committee, who regulate all such matters for their countrymen, and these positively refused the good offer, which included comfortable provision for cooking, and whatever else kindness could have bestowed. It appears that this vessel was at one time in the coolie trade, and the supposition is that the people thought they would be kidnapped. However, the Tung Wah people made no other provision for the luckless wretches, who have been all this time living in the open street, and at night are half perished with cold.

The extent of ground utterly ruined is quite awful. We walked up one street and down another, uphill and downhill, by the streets of stairs, and along the horizontal streets, for between two and three hours, and even then had not gone all over the ground. It is such a scene of desolation that I find it hard to realise that these are the very streets which on Christmas-day I saw crowded with comfortable-looking people. Now there are only a few blackened walls, and engines are still pumping vigorously on the mountains of fallen bricks, which in some places quite block the streets, and from which puffs of smoke still rise, as if to show that the foe is not dead, but only sleeping. It needs but a little neglect and a fresh breeze, and the chances are that the fire might break out again, and there is no saying where it would end. It would have a better chance now, for all the firemen are fairly worn out, as are also the soldiers and sailors, who have been on duty with very

small intermission for about forty hours, and who are still on guard at all points to check looting, and to prevent foolhardy people from going into danger in the neighbourhood of unsound walls. There will be an immense amount of work in even pulling these down, when they have cooled.

Mr Snowden met many of his acquaintances still in their fire-brigade helmets, all looking scorched and utterly exhausted. Several have been hurt. They say that never before has there been so disastrous a conflagration in Hong-Kong.

It is marvellous to see how capricious the fire has been. Here is a street with one side intact—the other wholly destroyed; here stands part of a gable with here and there a wooden shelf unscathed, on which rest securely a few delicate china vases or some growing plants. In one house which had blazed most fiercely, I saw the verandah up-stairs, of lattice woodwork, alone standing intact, while the whole house was gutted, and on the verandah were arranged pots with flowers and variegated leaves not even scorched, and, just above them, from a skeleton roof, hung a paper lantern untouched!

Some of the best curio shops are burned, and it is pitiful to see the beautiful great jars smashed, and lacquer all dirt-begrimed. In one place we came on the whole stock of a poor artist-photographer (who paints wonderfully correct, if not artistic, portraits in oil, from any old photograph) all strewn over the street, where lay his careful paintings all torn and soiled. Everywhere there is the same pitiful destruction, and stupefied people hanging listlessly about the smouldering wreck of their poor little property. Of course their losses strike one as more pathetic than the far larger destruction of fully insured rich men's houses.

I have just returned from a second long walk all over the scene of ruin. It has a horrible sort of attraction, even while it makes me feel sick at heart. Now I too confess to feeling utterly exhausted, though I have had nothing to do but just to sit still and watch at highest tension. And I devoutly hope never again to witness such a scene.

CHAPTER II.

FROM HONG-KONG TO CANTON.

New-Year's Day in Hong-Kong — Good winter-quarters — Pleasant society —Lights and shadows —Census— Deficient water - supply — Defective drainage—The summit of the peak—Across the isle to Aberdeen Docks —Primitive sugar-crushing—Dyeing nets—The Happy Valley—Cemeteries—Voyage to Canton—Pawn-towers—The foreign settlement—Its origin—Riot of 1883—Walk through the city—Shops—Street names—Primitive mills—Crowded streets—Beggars—Provisions—Fruit-shops—Flowers for New Year—Visit divers temples—Fireproof walls—Tartar and Chinese cities—The tornado of 1878.

HONG-KONG, *Wed.*, *Jan.* 1, 1879.

THIS has been the perfection of a lovely New-Year's day. The climate here at this season is quite delicious, like a soft, balmy English summer, redolent of flowers. You can walk comfortably at any hour of the day; but the mornings and evenings are pleasantest, and then the lights are most beautiful.

In the early morning there was a very nice service at the cathedral, the bishop giving a short and practical New-Year address, followed by celebration of the Holy Communion.

Hong-Kong society has adopted the American custom of converting this day into a social treadmill. All ladies sit at home the livelong day to receive the calls of all gentlemen of their acquaintance, while these rush from house to house, endeavouring to fit in the whole circle of their visiting list. Here the stream of callers began soon after breakfast, and continued all day, including all the foreign consuls, and others of divers nations — Japanese, Portuguese, Indians, French, Italian, &c.

To-night we dine at Government House, where there is to be a grand ball in honour of the New Year, and where we are to be enlivened by the pipers of the 74th and some cheery Highland reels.

GLEN-EALY, *Wed. 8th, chez* Mrs LOWCOCK.

Another week has glided by, and each day convinces me more and more that it would simply be impossible to find more delightful winter-quarters.

Morning, noon, evening, and night are all beautiful and all

pleasant, and there is the delight of continuous fine weather, which is warranted to continue throughout the five winter months, without the slightest chance of rain, or the faintest possibility of snow. Some days are just a trifle too cold—just enough to make us welcome a cheery fire in the evening; but all day there is bright sunlight and a cloudless blue sky. The climate is semi-tropical, and has rewarded the care of many gardeners by transforming what, forty years ago,[1] must have been a very barren rock, into a succession of pleasant shrubberies, so that all these palatial houses (which cover the hillside to a height of 400 feet above the sea) are embowered in rich foliage.

To-day we have been sitting in the garden of this pleasant home, beneath the cool shade of large thick-leaved India-rubber trees—noble trees, with great stems and spreading branches—which look as if they must have reigned here for centuries, so rapid has been their growth. And the camellia-trees are laden with snowy blossoms, while the air is scented with roses, mignonette, and jessamine, and now and again a faint breeze shakes the fluffy yellow balls of the sweet *babool*,[2] and floats on laden with a perfume that seems like a dream of Indian jungles and Hawaiian isles and far-away English conservatories.

Certainly I am exceptionally favoured in the situation of the various homes to which I am so kindly welcomed, my present luxuriant quarters[3] (which stand on a considerable elevation overlooking the harbour) having extensive private grounds almost adjoining the beautiful public gardens, just beyond which lies Government House—a fine building, with a pleasant garden—and in the valley just below this house stands St Paul's College, which is the bishop's home. Of all this, and indeed of all the principal points of interest about the city, this house commands a splendid view—a rare combination of a lovely harbour with shipping of all nations, high mountains, picturesque streets with overshadowing trees—and beyond the blue straits rise mountain-ridges on the mainland of China.

And the human life is equally characteristic. There is a very large, agreeable European society—naval, military, and civil—

[1] Another forty years bids fair to transform the island into a forest, as, in the hope of improving the climate, Sir John Pope Hennessey has most literally obeyed Sir Walter Scott's injunction to "be aye stickin' in a tree," and in the course of 1880 and 1881 he planted nearly 1,000,000 young *Pinus sinensis*, and about 60,000 other useful trees.

[2] Mimosa.

[3] The property of a great mercantile house, Messrs Gibb, Livingstone.

with surroundings of quaint Chinese men and women—the former with their long plaits, the latter with wonderfully dressed, glossy hair. Judging from my own experience, I can never again pity any one who is sent to Hong-Kong—at least in winter. I am, however, assured that there are two sides to the picture, and that we who rejoice in a thermometer which now never exceeds 65° in the shade, can scarcely realise how different life is when, in the close murky rains of summer, it stands at 90°, and the peak, which is now so clear, is all shrouded with heavy clouds which overhang the city like a thick pall, and prevent the stifling atmosphere from rising.

And there are other matters, too, which to the great mass of the inhabitants may make life in this city anything but a delight, and which present knotty problems so difficult of solution as sorely to tax the ingenuity and ability of those who have to deal with them—such matters as may in a measure suggest themselves to any one who considers how a very narrow strip of moderately level ground at the base of this steep mountain, which, forty years ago, was inhabited only by a handful of Chinese fishermen, now has a total population of 130,000 persons (without counting that of the villages in different parts of Hong-Kong—some of which may almost rank as little towns—and which run up the population to 160,000.[1]

Moreover, although the level strip of shore at the base of the mountain has been greatly enlarged by reclamation, and now forms the harbour frontage of the city (and although the city itself extends along the shore for a distance of very nearly four miles from east to west, running back inland for about half a mile, and climbing the hillside in a succession of terraces to a height of upwards of

[1] Statistics of the City of Victoria—Census of 1881.

	Europeans and Americans.	Portuguese, Indian, and Mixed Blood.	Chinese.	Chinese Boat Population.
Men	5499	1161	69,455	7635
Women . . .	899	181	18,067	3440
Boys	857	191	8,872	3061
Girls	735	189	8,701	2551

If we omit the Chinese boat population, which lives quite apart from the rest of the community, we find that the proportion of men to women in this city is 76,000 to 19,000—a detail in itself suggestive of serious social difficulties.

400 feet), a very large portion of this space is covered with a dense mass of Chinese houses, where the greatest possible number of human beings are packed into the very smallest possible amount of space.

But for all this multitude of human habitations, no sort of effective drains or sewers have been provided—only conduits for the superfluous rains, to carry their torrents by the straightest course into the harbour—and whatever sewerage finds its way into these, is simply deposited along the whole harbour front, thus poisoning what else might be a pleasant situation. But, as regards all that is generally understood by the term "sanitary arrangements," except in the palatial homes of Europeans, all such necessary matters are provided for in a manner primitive in the extreme; and the arrangements for the daily (or among the poorer classes only bi-weekly!) removal of nuisances from every house (for subsequent conveyance to the mainland as an article of agricultural commerce) form a very unpleasant page in the details of sanitary statistics of her Majesty's empire.

Then, too, although this "Island of fragrant streams" (which is one of its Chinese names) is really by nature well supplied with such pure sparkling waters as percolate through a soil composed wholly of disintegrated granite and other primitive rock, the actual water-supply of the city is miserably inadequate, and it is estimated that in the dry season (just when there is the greatest danger of fires), the whole quantity available cannot exceed six gallons a-day per head. Even if this miserably insufficient supply could be equally distributed and stored with the greatest economy, it would barely suffice for drinking and cooking purposes, leaving no margin for the baths which we deem such a downright necessary of life.

On the present system, however, it is found that there is large waste, and while some houses secure an ample supply, an immense number of the inhabitants have to pay water-carriers at the rate of from $\frac{1}{2}$d. to 1d. per bucket (according to the distance and height to which it has to be carried). These men assemble at early dawn round the street fountains, waiting till the water is turned on, when a general scramble for precedence ensues, as the supply is often shut off ere all can get a turn. Then these poor folk have either to buy water from some well, or else to climb the steep hill and seek their day's supply wherever they can find it in one of the rivulets or water-holes.

In the absence of proper laundries, all the most accessible of

these streams are used for washing purposes, and the stagnant pools are filled with putrefying soap-suds. Moreover, though there are many shallow surface-wells in various parts of the town, they are in so many cases in such close proximity to the house-drain, that their waters are almost inevitably contaminated.

A very curious point in connection with the subject, is the singular injustice of the Government water-rate, by which a uniform rate of two per cent is levied on the assessed annual rental of all houses in Victoria, whether they have water laid on or not. As there is no extra charge for extra consumption, the man whose house is amply provided with luxurious baths, and whose garden is not only well watered but perhaps even adorned with fountains, pays no more than does his neighbour whose house has no water-service, and who is consequently compelled to pay a coolie for fetching his supply from wherever he may be able to find or purchase it (which is probably from one of the wells of doubtful purity).

As regards the sufficiency of supply, however, there is every reasonable hope that this will shortly be remedied, as it is now proposed to create a great reservoir in a valley which receives the natural drainage of the granite hills on every side, and where it is supposed that an ample supply may be secured, even in view of still further extension of the city.

A few such details as these, however, unhappily suggest that here, as elsewhere, the brightest lights contrast with darkest shadows; and while to the few, including such birds of passage as myself, this island appears quite delightful, life here must to the vast majority have its decided disadvantages. Certainly the perfumed breath of flowers, which is so pleasant a characteristic of our daily life here, is a joy altogether unknown to the inhabitants of the densely packed houses below, where the close stifling atmosphere of crowded, airless rooms must be suggestive of anything but fragrance!

But to such as have no call to look below the surface, all may be very bright and pleasant; and although the anxieties and fatigues connected with the great fire did cause a perceptible lull in the programme of the Christmas-week festivities, which were to have included sundry great picnics, there has been no lack of pleasant social gatherings, and as to the picnics, we have had probably more enjoyable expeditions by ourselves to the chief points of interest on the isle, to all of which we are carried (at least part of the way) in comfortable arm-chairs, slung on bamboos, and borne

on the shoulders of two men, with two more to relieve guard. Here all manner of transport service, whether of human beings or goods, is done by man-power. Horses, carriages, and carts are virtually non-existent. There may be in all about half-a-dozen (or possibly at the outset a dozen) horses and ponies to all this great population, and one or two pony-carriages, which alone represent wheeled vehicles, the steepness of the roads making such practically useless.[1]

There are pretty villages and valleys all along the back of the isle, so some days we journey round the base of the mountain mass, and sometimes follow some steep hill-path which leads us over a pass, and down the other side. A favourite expedition is to the summit of the peak, where the Governor, the Chief-Justice, and some of the principal foreign residents have cottages, where they can live for change of air in summer, coming down 1800 feet to their daily work. (I think their coolies must sorely regret this migration to summer-quarters!) The view hence in every direction is very fine.[2]

Yesterday we crossed the main ridge which forms the backbone of the island, at a point called "Victoria Gap," and down the other side to "Aberdeen," a town which has grown up round the Hong-Kong docks, where we saw a huge American steamer undergoing repairs, and surrounded by innumerable little sampans (native house-boats). The scene was very suggestive of Gulliver in Liliput! It was to a great banyan-tree on a small island in this harbour that Commodore Anson fastened his ship to haul her over for repairs, just about 150 years ago. Little did he dream what familiar names Britons would hereafter bestow on these scenes!

Continuing along the coast, we came to Little Hong-Kong, a very pretty richly-wooded valley between rugged hills, with the sea forming an inland lake, and a foreground of fantastic screw-pine. There is a good deal of fine timber on that side of the isle, and we halted at a lovely shady spot to boil our kettle and enjoy a cheery tea.

A little farther we paused to watch a most primitive method of crushing sugar-cane between two stone-rollers, which are turned by three bullocks, the juice falling between the rollers into a bucket beside the man who feeds the machine with fresh cane. Another man at the back of the rollers removes the crushed canes.

[1] Recently, however, the *jinricksha*, or Japanese bath-chair, drawn by one or two men, has come largely into fashion.

[2] Since my visit to the peak, a church has been erected for the good of this aspiring colony.

In "Deep Bay" we found a colony of fishers boiling their nets in an exceedingly tall vat, containing a decoction of mangrove-bark, which produces much the same rich brown colour as our own fishers extract from alder-bark. Here, however, it is considered necessary subsequently to steep the nets in pig's blood to fix the colour. Those in common use are made of hemp, but others are made of a very coarse silk, which is spun by wild silk-worms, which feed on mountain-oaks. In order to give these additional strength, they are soaked in wood-oil.

We saw nets of very varied shape and divers-sized mesh hanging up to dry all along the shore, beneath the weird screw-pines. I am told that at the beginning of every fishing season they are formally consecrated to the Queen of Heaven, the protectress of fisher-folk, to whom sacrifices and incense are duly offered, while the nets are outspread before her to receive her blessing.

Once more facing the hill, and "setting a stout heart to a stey brae," we ascended to the Stanley Gap, whence the view on either side is very grand; and we watched a red sunset glowing over sea and isles, and glorifying the Chinese mainland, while a full moon shone gloriously over this harbour and the farther hills, which are also part of the mainland.

Then we had to turn away from the red glow and be content with moonlight only (but such lovely moonlight!) as we came down through the Happy Valley, where the beautiful cemeteries for Hindoos, Parsees, Protestants, Roman Catholics, and Mohammedans lie side by side along the base of the hill, overlooking the very fine racecourse; on the farther side of which, on another hill, lies the Chinese cemetery, suggesting curious contrasts between the races to be run and those that are run. The Happy Valley lay very still and peaceful in the moonlight, its beauty seeming an additional point in favour of a colony whose dead may rest in so fair a spot.

I have seen various very attractive scenes for sketches, but for these I must wait till my return from Canton, where I go to-morrow, being anxious to see the city in its normal condition, before the commencement of all the feverish excitement of the New-Year festival, which (varying from year to year in consequence of reckoning by lunar months) will this year fall on the 22d January, after which there follows a spell of festivity, when all business is at a standstill.

The distance from here to Canton is about 95 miles—an eight hours' trip by an American daily steamer.

Chez Mrs Lind,
Shameen, the Foreign Settlement,
Canton, *Jan. 9th.*

Embarked at 7.30 this morning, Captain Benning kindly providing me with a chair on his high deck, that I might have full enjoyment of the scenery, which in the early morning light was most beautiful. Presently, when we were clear of the island, he took me all over the ship to see the manner in which the Chinese passengers, to the number of about 1500, are stowed away, the more respectable class on a lower deck, and the common herd in the hold, where they are packed close as herring in a barrel. Each stair connecting their quarters with the rest of the ship is barricaded by a heavy iron grating, securely padlocked, and at each stands a sentry with drawn sword and revolver, keeping a keen look-out down the gangway. This guard is relieved every hour. All the officers are similarly armed, and in the wheel-house are stands of arms all ready for use in case of need.

All these precautions are against the ever-present danger of pirates, who might so easily take passage among their inoffensive countrymen—in fact, these measures have been adopted in consequence of a pirate band having thus seized the s.s. Spark, murdered the captain and some of the officers and passengers, and made good their escape with a lot of specie. Some of them were eventually captured, and confessed that on a previous day they had been on board this very ship with similar intent, and a boat-load of their confederates were waiting at a given point, where the attack was to be made. But just as they reached this spot, four foreign sail were in sight (a very unusual circumstance), and they were alarmed, so refrained from action. On referring to his log, Captain Benning found these four sail mentioned at this very hour, and fully realised how narrow had been his own escape.

At about eleven o'clock we passed between the Bogue Forts (dull-looking earthworks), which mark the entrance to Pearl River. (*Bogue* apparently answers to our *Aber*—"the mouth of.") The stream here is half a mile wide. About thirty miles farther we passed a nine-storied pagoda, and the old town of Whampoa, and more fortifications; and steering an intricate course through an innumerable crowd of junks and sampans, we noted the richly cultivated lands and market-gardens, which provide not only for the 1,500,000 inhabitants of Canton (some say 2,000,000), but also for the markets of Hong-Kong.

The shores are dotted with villages, in each of which stands one

conspicuous great solid square structure of granite, lined with brick, about four stories high. It looks like an old Border keep, but it really is the village pawn-shop, which acts as the safe store-house for everybody's property. Here in winter are deposited all summer garments, and when spring returns they are reclaimed; and as the winter garments which are then left in pawn are more valuable, the owner sometimes receives an advance of seed for sowing his crops. Here there is no prejudice against the pawning of goods. It is a regular institution of the country, and even wealthy people send their goods here for safe keeping. Some foreigners thus dispose of their furs in the winter season. All goods are neatly packed and ticketed, and stored in pigeon-hole compartments of innumerable shelves, ranged tier above tier, to the very summit of the tall building, which is strongly protected both against fire and thieves; in fact, the latter must be mad indeed to face the danger of attacking a pawn-tower, on whose flat roof are stored not only large stones ready to be dropped on their devoted heads, but also earthenware jars full of vitriol, and syringes wherewith to squirt this terrible liquid fire! As we approached nearer and nearer to the city, the number of these great towers multiplied, and I am told that there are in Canton upwards of a hundred first-class pawn-towers, besides a multitude of the second and third class, sufficiently proving how good must be their business; and it seems that notwithstanding the very high rate of interest on money lent, ranging from 20 to 36 per cent, the people prefer borrowing money from these brokers to applying to the banks.

With the exception of these numerous square towers, some fortifications, and the very imposing Roman Catholic cathedral (abhorred by the Chinese chiefly as having been built on land unjustly appropriated by the French), we saw little, save a moderate amount of smoke, to suggest that we were approaching a mighty city—the great southern capital of the Empire—so entirely are its low level streets concealed by the forest of masts of innumerable junks and vessels of all sorts. Only in the distance rose a background of low hills, which are the White Cloud range. Altogether the first impressions of Canton are in most notable contrast to those of lovely Hong-Kong.

Approaching the city, we noted the little English cemetery on a low hillock near the river, and about two o'clock we came in sight of this wondrously green isle—the Shameen, or "Sandy Face," where handsome foreign houses appear mingling with shady banyan and other trees.

Among the crowd assembled on the embankment to watch the arrival of the steamer, I noticed a group of chair-coolies in pretty uniform, bearing a resplendent palanquin, which I supposed to contain some great mandarin, and was considerably taken aback on learning that it had been sent for me, being the special property of my hostess — the equivalent of a carriage in England. I must honestly confess that my ideas of life in Canton were altogether *bouleversé* by this first glimpse of the luxuries of foreign life up here. I had imagined that a few exiles from Hong-Kong, who could not help themselves, had, owing to the exigencies of business, to live here, picnic fashion, in the dirty city itself, which I supposed to be much on a par with the native town at Shanghai, only more picturesque. I daresay I ought to have known better, but I did not. So it was a most startling revelation to find myself in a very smart, purely foreign settlement, as entirely isolated from the native city as though they were miles apart, instead of being only divided by a canal, which constitutes this peaceful green spot an island.

Here is transplanted an English social life so completely fulfilling all English requirements, that the majority of the inhabitants rarely enter the city! They either walk round the isle, or up and down the wide grass road, overshadowed by banyan-trees, which encircles the isle (a circuit of a mile and a half), and which is the "Rotten Row" of the island—the meeting-place for all friends; but in place of horses and carriages, its interests centre in boats without number, and from this embankment those who wish to go farther, embark in their own or in hired boats.

A handsome English church, and large luxurious two-storied houses of Italian architecture, with deep verandahs, the homes of wealthy merchants, are scattered over the isle, embowered in the shade of their own gardens; and altogether this little spot—washed on one side by the Pearl River, and on the other by the canal—is as pleasant a quarter as could be desired.

It is hard to realise that, previous to the capture of Canton in 1857, a hideous mud-flat occupied the place where this green isle now lies. Having been selected as a suitable spot for a foreign settlement, piles were driven into the river and filled up with sand, and on this foundation was built an embankment of solid granite, which is now the daily recreation-ground of all the foreign population. But nothing that now meets the eye on this artificial island suggests the enormous labour by which this transformation was accomplished.

Indescribable, however, is the contrast between the peace and calm which here reign and the crowds and dirt and bustle of the great Chinese city, from which it is only separated by a narrow canal bridged at two points, each bridge being guarded by a sentry.[1] We can saunter beneath shady trees on the canal embankment and —overlooking the closely-packed house-boats which lie moored close below us—we see the busy tide of life surging on the opposite shore. I hope ere long to find myself in the midst of it, and explore all the wonders of the great city.

Saturday Night, 11*th Jan.*

For two whole days we have been wandering through this wonderful city, and how to describe it in sober English is more than I can tell!

Fascinating as the bazaars of Cairo to an untravelled artist; bewildering as the thronged and narrow streets of Benares, yet differing so essentially from these as to form a totally new experience in the annals of travel,—Canton stands by itself in every impression it conveys. Alike in this only, that the days spent in each of these three cities must for ever rise above the ordinary level of our memory-pictures, as some tall pagoda towers above the plain.

What chiefly strikes one on arriving in Canton is not so much the temples (though of these there are, I believe, about eight hundred, dedicated to gods and goddesses innumerable, and all more or less richly adorned with shrines, images, fine temple-bronzes, and elaborate wood-carving). What really fascinates the eye and be-

[1] Till September 10, 1883, that slight barrier was effectual, for something of the "divinity that doth hedge a king" seemed to enfold these foreigners, and to act as a magic protection. Then, alas! the charm was broken, and the illusion dispelled. As usual, "a little matter" kindled a great fire. A "mean white" shot at a Chinaman in a drunken brawl, and another Chinaman was thrown overboard by a Portuguese sailor, from a British ship, and unfortunately was drowned.

As the offenders were not immediately punished, the mob took the law into its own hands, and attacked the foreign settlement. Some think that if the French, English, and Germans had organised a defence, barricading their houses and displaying their firearms from the upper verandahs, the assailants would not have attempted to cross the bridge. As it was, however, they simply abandoned the isle, and embarked on two large river-steamers, whereupon the much-astonished rabble proceeded to loot and burn several large houses. The wonder was that they should have been so moderate, and abstained from further destruction. Unfortunately the blackened roofless houses remain to remind the mob how easy it would be to complete their task on the next occasion; and though the residents soon ventured to return (the isle being defended on one side by a guard of nondescript Chinese soldiers, and on the other by three foreign gunboats anchored in the river), they have, since then, been virtually prisoners, not venturing on their accustomed expeditions inland, and scarcely into the town, and subject to ever-recurring panics on account of the anti-foreign feeling stirred up by French action.

wilders the mind is simply the common street-life, which, from morning till night, as you move slowly through the streets, presents a succession of pictures, each of intense interest and novelty. In all this there is life—the real life of a great busy people—and one feels that it is really an effort to turn aside from these to see any recognised "sight." In the temples there is stagnation. Their gilding and beautiful carving are defaced and incrusted with dirt; the worshippers are only occasional, for they have so very many gods, all requiring worship by turns.

But the interest of the streets cannot be surpassed, though most of them are dirty and all are narrow, some being only about six feet wide, and many not exceeding eight feet! Even this is further reduced by the singular but very effective manner of hanging out sign-boards at right angles to the shops, some suspended like the signs of old English inns, and some set upright in carved and gilded stands at the corners of the shop. They are just great planks, ten to fifteen feet in height, some black, some scarlet, some blue, some white, and a few green, and on which are embossed strange characters in scarlet or gold, which, though perhaps really merely stating the name of the shop, appear to our ignorant eyes both beautiful and mysterious!

Some shops hang up a great pasteboard model of their principal goods: a satin skull-cap or a conical straw hat denote a hatter, a shoe for a shoemaker, a fan or an umbrella for the seller of these; a huge pair of spectacles or a great gilded dragon each convey their invitation to all comers. Some streets are all given over to the workers in one trade—they are all ivory-carvers, or coffin-makers, or purveyors of strange offerings for the dead or for the gods.

I believe the chief secret of the fascination of these streets lies in the fact that you see right into every shop, so that whenever you *can* turn your eyes aside from looking right along the street, and can gaze either to right or left, each shop frontage of ten feet reveals a scene which would make the fortune of the artist who could render it faithfully.

Here a shop is not merely a receptacle of articles for sale, it is also a manufactory, where, if you have leisure to linger, you can watch each process from the beginning; and if the various things in common use among these strange people strike us as quaint, much more curious is it to see them actually made.

Moreover, limited as is the space in these tiny shops, each has at least three shrines set apart for family worship. At the threshold is a tablet to the Earth Gods, before which on certain evenings

are set red tapers and incense-sticks. Within the home are the Ancestral Tablets, and the altar of the Kitchen God, each of which requires many offerings and an ever-burning light. A vast multitude of shops have also an altar to the God of Wealth.

As seen from the street, the central and most striking object is invariably the name of the shop, painted on a large board in gold and bright colours, with so much carving and gilding as to make it really a gorgeous object. Above this is generally placed an image or picture of some lucky sage, or the God of Wealth, while below are two gaudy fans, to which at the New-Year festival are added enormous ornaments of gold and coloured flowers, while gay lanterns of very varied form and pattern hang in front to light up the whole.

To the initiated, some of the quaint-looking characters inscribed on these gorgeous shop-boards are full of interest. Here is a wealthy merchant who gratefully acknowledges the favours of that fat God of Wealth who occupies so conspicuous a place in his shop, and who day by day receives such devout worship. So the tall sign-post announces the house as being "Prospered by Heaven." Another declares himself to be "Ten thousand times fortunate," while his neighbour claims "Never-ending Good Luck." Here we come to "Celestial Bliss," and a little farther an honest soul proclaims his heart's desire in the name assumed, "Great Gains," while another announces his store as "The Market of Golden Profits."

But when we come to note the names of the streets, they really are touchingly allegorical. Here is the street of Everlasting Love, the street of Ten Thousandfold Peace, of Benevolence and Love, of Accumulated Blessings, of a Thousand Beatitudes. Special streets are consecrated to "the Saluting Dragon," "the Dragon in Repose," "the Ascending Dragon." A peculiarly unfragrant street, in this unsavoury city, is characterised as the "Street of Refreshing Breezes"! The value attached to numerous descendants is suggested by the streets of "One Hundred Grandsons" and the still more auspicious "One Thousand Grandsons."

Picture to yourself a vast city, with miles and miles of such streets, all so narrow that the blue sky overhead seems but a strip, which in many places is shut out by screens of matting or boarding, extending from roof to roof, casting deep shadows which intensify the wealth of colour below.

The streets are paved with long narrow stone slabs, but with no causeway for foot-passengers, for riders are few and far between:

and as to chairs, they block up the street, so that the patient crowd must step close to the shops to let them pass. With the exception of a few wealthy tradesmen, who indulge in silks and satins of divers colours, all the crowd are dressed in blue, and all alike have quaintly shaven heads, and a long plait of glossy black hair, which for convenience is sometimes twined round the head during work, but must always hang full length when in presence of a superior. A closely-fitting black satin skull-cap is apparently an essential part of the costume of a well-dressed tradesman or domestic servant. There is no drowsiness here—all are intent on their own business, and hurry to and fro, yet never seem to jostle or even touch one another.

After the gay crowds of Japanese women and children, the predominance of men in a Chinese crowd is a very marked feature: women are comparatively few, and all are large-footed—in other words, plebeian (none the worse for that in our eyes). But the ladies of the lily feet (*i.e.*, the distorted hoofs) must remain in the seclusion of their homes, or at best must be carried through the street in closely-covered chairs. Those we do see are very simply dressed in prune-coloured loosely-fitting clothes; but all have bare heads and black hair elaborately dressed and ornamented with clasps of imitation jadestone; most have ear-rings and bangles to match.

Young unbetrothed girls wear their hair all brushed back, and plaited in one heavy tress just like the men; but, instead of their shaven forehead, they comb the front hair right over the brow in a straight fringe. So soon as a girl is affianced she must change her style of hair-dressing, and adopt the large chignon with the eccentric twist, which is so suggestive of a teapot with its handle.

To my uneducated eye, all these men and all these women are extraordinarily alike. The same features, the same yellow skin, the same black hair and dark eyes, and, at first sight, even the same expression. Talk of being "as like as two peas;" I think we might say, as like as two Chinamen. It is odd to see a whole crowd of such, especially as even their clothes are so much alike. The vast majority, both of men and women, wear an upper garment of dark-blue material, precisely the shape of an ordinary shirt (*minus* neck or wrist-bands). The peculiarity of the said shirt is that it is worn as the outer garment! This being mid-winter, the weather is supposed to be cold, so every one is wearing thickly wadded clothes, and the whole population has a general look of comfortable stoutness!

Another remarkable feature of this crowd is that almost all are on foot, except when a foreigner, a woman, or a mandarin is carried along on men's shoulders in a curious closed-up chair. The wonder is how the bearers can make their way through the crowded streets; but they keep up a constant shouting, and the patient people stand aside. So the cumbersome chair passes rapidly, unchecked by the multitude of busy tradesmen, who also hurry along, each carrying on his shoulder a pole, from which are suspended his very varied goods.

Thus a confectioner, or baker, has two large boxes, with trays of good things; a fishmonger carries two large flat tubs full of live fish, that most in favour being a long, narrow flat fish, resembling a silver sword; or perhaps he carries two trays of bleeding fish, cut up into portions suited to the humblest purses, and smeared with blood to make them look fresh and inviting. The stationary fishmongers keep their fresh-water fish alive in tubs, which are not only full of water, but through which a running stream is made to trickle ceaselessly. The locomotive butcher likewise has two trays of raw meat, divided into infinitesimal portions of dubious animals. The gardener brings his flowers and vegetables slung in two large flat baskets; the artificial florist carries his in a box with trays, and rings a sort of small bell as he goes along; and the barber carries his quaint scarlet stool, brass basin, and razors, ready to do any amount of shaving and hair-dressing in the open street.

Each of these figures is picturesque in his way; but the barber is especially so, with his broad-brimmed straw hat, and loose dark-blue trousers and blouse, which contrast so well with the bright scarlet of the very ornamental stand on which rests the brass basin. This hangs from one end of his shoulder-pole, balanced by the aforesaid scarlet stool, which is, in fact, a small pyramidal cabinet with several drawers and flat top. I should like to invest in one, as I think no one has yet thought of taking home a barber's stool as a cabinet!

Our old apple-women are represented by men selling sugar-cane, and oranges all ready peeled, the latter being sold for a smaller sum than the unpeeled, inasmuch as the rind is worth more for medicinal purposes than the fruit itself.

Right through the busy crowd rush men bearing brimming buckets of fresh water, slung from the bamboo on their shoulders, as the sole water-supply of a multitude of the citizens; and others, without any sort of warning, trot along bearing most objectionable

and unfragrant uncovered buckets, inclining foreigners to believe that Chinamen were created without the sense of smell; and proving that the sanitary arrangements of the city are of the same primitive order (and with the same view to economical agriculture) as in Hong-Kong, the very elaborate system of city drains being designed only to carry off superfluous water from the streets.

One singular feature in the streets of Canton is the multitude of blind beggars, who go about in strings of eight or ten together —literally the blind leading the blind. I met a gentleman the other day who assured me that he once saw six hundred of these blind beggars, all assembled to share a beneficent distribution of rice. Nor are other beggars lacking — wild, unkempt-looking creatures, who gather in picturesque groups round the clay ovens, where, on payment of infinitesimal coin, savoury food is prepared and served out to them smoking hot.

Of course we made a point of going to see the shops where dried rats and fresh frogs, and nicely cooked cats and dogs, are displayed for sale, at so much a portion, the more highly esteemed pieces being charged extra. Some people are so prejudiced as to consider these cat and rat stalls rather a nasty sight; but I don't see that a nice fat puppy is much worse than the sucking-pig on the next stall, or indeed anything like so unpleasant as the great bleeding carcasses in our own butchers' shops. It is only at certain restaurants that these dainties are provided to suit special customers, who are chiefly respectable tradesmen; but in the early summer men of all ranks, and in all parts of China, make a point of eating dogs, fried in oil, with garlic and water-chestnuts, as a sort of tonic and antidote against probable illness. So summer brings "dog-days" even in China!

At present many of the provision shops seem to be entirely filled with ducks, split open and dried, these being evidently the correct thing to eat on New-Year's eve. The marvel is where so many ducks could have come from!

As to the fruit-shops, it may be merely the accident of the season, but it seems as if the fruiterers purposely adorned their stalls with gold and yellow fruits (this being the auspicious colour), —masses of oranges of all sorts, gourds, bananas, and especially that extraordinary lemon known as "Buddha's fingers," which does bear some resemblance to a grotesque human hand with the fingers pressed together, and is a favourite subject for soapstone and jade carvers.

I wish I could give you a faint idea of a thousandth part of

what I saw in yesterday's morning walk through the principal streets of Canton, before we even began to explore its temples and other wonderful sights. This was merely an idle morning on foot, when we had leisure to look about us and watch the preparations already being made for the great New-Year festival. The tall sign-boards in the open streets were being adorned with festoons of crimson cloth and large tassels and bunches of gilt flowers, adding yet more colour to the scene.

A very pretty symptom of the approaching festival is the large number of peasants who come in from the country with branches of early blossoming peach, and bundles of budding sticks. These buds open in a few days, and bunches of small red, rather wax-like bells appear. Every man, however poor, and every boat on the crowded river, endeavours to have some blossom ready to greet the New Year. Pots of narcissus, chrysanthemums, and fragrant Japanese daphnes find ready customers, and the market flower-gardeners of Fa-tee obtain much custom from the rich mandarins, both for the adornment of their own houses and of their splendid guilds.

We explored shops where curious masks and gorgeous crowns and other theatrical properties are manufactured. We passed by exchanges of money, whose sign is a huge string of gilt cash like those in use here, and which are worth about a thousand to a dollar; and we lingered long, watching jewellers making exquisite ornaments of kingfishers' feathers, green and blue, inlaid like enamel on a gold ground. A few steps farther we paused beside an ivory-carver, producing the most delicate and costly work, undisturbed by passers-by. Next we halted to see the processes of rice being husked and pounded by foot-mills, and wheat ground to flour by bullocks turning grindstones which are placed one above the other. The oxen are blindfolded to save them from giddiness.

It was so odd to be standing in the street and to look in at a narrow frontage, past a party of men quietly dining, and to see away into the long perspective of a far back store, wherein at least a dozen of these primitive bullock-mills were working in a line. Beyond the blue haze and gloom of this interior we could see bright sunlight in the inner court, where the women were spinning cotton. Then we turned into a glass-blower's house, and watched the glass being blown into the form of a huge globe, and afterwards cut in pieces and flattened in a furnace.

Need I tell you how gladly we would have lingered for hours at the shops of paper-umbrella makers, fan makers, artificial-flower

makers, manufacturers of quaint and beautiful lanterns, and lamps of all sorts? Coopers, carpenters, wood-carvers—each had its own special interest for us. Even the tailors cutting out strange silken garments, and the washermen ironing, were novelties in the way of street scenes; and the very tallow-chandlers become picturesque in this country, with their bunches of little red candles of vegetable tallow mixed with insect wax for domestic shrines, and gorgeously ornamented ones for the use of the temples and wealthy men.

Another whole street is devoted solely to the sale of feathers of all sorts—but especially of peacocks and pheasants, chiefly those of the silvery Amherst pheasant, which is found on the Yang-foo river, and the Reeves pheasant: the male bird of the latter has two beautiful feathers of extraordinary length (from four to five feet), which are worn on the stage by actors as a head decoration.

Then we came to more ivory-carvers, and more workers in kingfishers' feathers, and then a whole street for the sale of beautiful blackwood furniture, which is really made of Singapore redwood, but which takes a colour and polish equal to the finest ebony, and is very much less brittle. I think the goods produced are handsomer and far more solid than the black carved furniture of Bombay.

Every now and then some great man was borne past us in his heavy chair, followed by lesser men riding, while retainers on foot ran before to clear the way, a process in which they turn their long plait to a most singular purpose, namely, that of a whip, with which they strike the bystanders, as a hint to move aside quickly!

We saw a gay marriage-party, the bride's chair gorgeous with scarlet and gold, and her wedding-gifts carried in scarlet boxes, all *supposed* to be full. Soon after we met a great procession in honour of some idols, which were conveyed along in gaudy cars, and preceded by crowds of small boys carrying lanterns and banners. Then a funeral overtook us, with mourners all dressed in white, bearing the dead in the massive wooden coffin which had probably been given him many years previously by his dutiful children, and which even now was not on its way to burial, but to be laid in the City of the Dead, there to remain in its own hired house, rented at so much a-month, perhaps for years, till the priests choose to announce that the auspicious moment for burial has at length arrived, when it may be laid in a horse-shoe-shaped tomb on some bleak hillside.

This morning we secured the services of a guide who has long

been a servant of Archdeacon Gray, who is the great authority on all matters of local interest, having himself an extraordinary knowledge of Chinese manners and customs, rites and ceremonies. I believe there is not a corner in all the intricate turns and twists of the city, nor a court in its countless temples, with which he is not perfectly familiar. I had been greatly counting on the privilege of making his acquaintance, on the strength of an introduction from Sir Harry Parkes, but, to my great regret, find that he has returned to England. So we had to console ourselves with the second-hand erudition of Ah Kum, whom the Archdeacon carefully instructed in all the points most certain to interest travellers, all of whom are therefore deeply indebted to him for this living guide, as well as for the written records of all his own wanderings in the city.

We started in chairs, so as to make the most of our time; besides, the distances are very great, and we were carried at a bewildering pace through miles of the narrowest, quaintest streets, which at intervals are spanned by stone archways, forming part of the fireproof walls which intersect the city in every direction, dividing the city into separate wards. Each archway has a strong fireproof door, which is locked every night, and can at any time be closed in case of disturbance, so as to isolate each section of the great city. These archways are generally adorned with sculpture, and form a characteristic feature in the scene.

Among the many temples we visited to-day, one was dedicated to the Five Hundred Disciples of Buddha, whose five hundred life-sized gilded images are ranged all round the temple, so as to form a double square, while others are ranged in cruciform lines, meeting at a bronze dagoba which doubtless contains a relic of some great saint. Each of these statues is different, though all are alike hideous, and are supposed to be life-like. Some are sad, some merry, some in tattered garments and barefoot, while some are well dressed and well shod. An extra statue represents the Emperor Kienlung, who was greatly revered, and the three Buddhas watch over all.

Then we proceeded to the Temple of Longevity, where I noted in the first place that the four frightful images who act as gate-keepers have little prayers glued all over them, instead of the little prayer-papers being chewed and spat at them as in Japan! Here there are the usual three great gilded images of Buddha, past, present, and future; in a second shrine stands a gilded pagoda containing a relic of Gautama himself. In a third shrine is a colossal image of the very fat, most jovial-looking Buddha of

Longevity, to whom parents return thanks for the filling of their quivers.

Here we were admitted to see the monastic refectory and the abbot's apartments, as also a very characteristic Chinese garden with artificial pond and fantastic bridges.

We passed by the prisons, but had heard too much of their awful horror to wish to pause to look upon misery which we could not alleviate. Besides the appalling tortures which are judicially inflicted, the brutal oppressions and extortions of the jailers make these places hells of the most terrible description. It was grievous enough to see the poor fellows who, being convicted only of minor offences, are as a great favour allowed (laden with chains and with fetters round neck, arms, and feet) to take up a position outside the prison, and there earn a pittance by working at their respective trades—knowing, however, that their cruel oppressors will mulct them of the greater part of their little gains.

Considering all we know of the fearful condition of the prisons, it is almost superfluous to remark that the services of a barber are dispensed with, and an unshaven Chinaman is a most miserable-looking being—worse even than a Fijian who has been mulcted of his external polish of cocoa-nut oil.

Our next visit was to the Temple of the Five Rams, on which the Five Genii (who preside over the five elements of Earth, Fire, Metal, Water, and Wood) descended from Heaven to Canton, bearing ears of corn, and all manner of blessings. The Rams are said to have petrified, and the great interest of this temple centres in five roughly-hewn stones, which are supposed to be the genuine animals. Here, too, is an image of the Monkey-God, clad in a silken suit; and here, in a great belfry, is a huge bell, the striking of which inevitably brings disaster to Canton. (Strange to say, an English shell did strike it during the siege of 1862—an era of horror, of which one minor incident was the massacre by the French of ninety-six men, women, and children, in the street called Wing-Tsing-Kai, to avenge the death of a French cook who had here been assassinated in a provision shop.)

Another notable object in this temple, which to me was especially interesting, is Buddha's colossal footprint, which is artificially dug out of the rock, and is now half full of water. Having already travelled as a true pilgrim to the Sri Pada—the "Holy Footprint" of Ceylon—I was, of course, in a position to look upon this humble imitation with a sense of superiority! There was, however, a feeling of great peace and quietness about this temple, owing to the

exclusion of the staring, pressing crowd, so we acknowledged the wisdom of our guide's suggestion that we should rest awhile, and have our luncheon beside the Holy Footprint, which we accordingly did, under the guardianship of the Five Rams.

Ah Kum next carried us off to see a temple tower wherein is kept a clepsydra or water-clock — a most ingenious contrivance which seems to have been in use among various ancient nations. The simple apparatus consists of four copper buckets placed one above the other, on four steps of brickwork. The four buckets are connected by tiny troughs, by which the water drips drop by drop from the base of each bucket into the one below. Hence the Chinese name, "Copper-jar water-dropper."

The lowest vessel is covered. In it is a wooden float, through which is passed an upright copper tablet, marked with divisions of time. This is set at a given height twice daily—at 5 A.M. and at 5 P.M.—and as the index rises through an opening in the cover, the watchman in charge of this strange clock announces the hours by placing on the clock-tower large white boards on which the hour is marked in black characters. During the watches of the night he strikes the hour on two great drums. Twice a-day the water is transferred from the lowest vessel to the upper one, and once in three months a fresh supply is allowed.

A man in charge of this place sells time-sticks, 32 inches in length, which are warranted to burn for twelve hours; and so exactly are the divisions calculated, that they are true time-keepers. Two sorts are sold, however, a special stick being calculated for windy weather, when the consumption is more rapid. They are advertised as being constructed according to the direction of official astrologers. This method of reckoning is so ancient, that its origin is lost in the mists of ages. But here we find both fire and water enlisted in the service of Old Time.

On the top storey of this temple tower is a shrine to the god Sin-Fuung, whose aid is besought by masters or mistresses whose slaves have run away. Near his image waits an attendant on horseback ready to do his bidding; so the suppliants tie cords round this horse's neck, as a gentle hint that their slaves may be securely tied up and restored to them.

Ill-used slaves likewise seek the protection of the gods. In the case of female slaves, whose lives are embittered by harsh mistresses, they can resort to the shrine of a sympathetic goddess, to whom all unhappy women confide their woes, and assist her memory by laying on her altar simple paper effigies of those who

have caused their sorrow. Thus a slave brings a paper image of her mistress; a sorrowful mother brings one of her son or daughter; the neglected wife brings a rude likeness of her husband. These are stuck up with the head downwards, to show that the heart is misplaced, and that the goddess alone can change it to its rightful position.

The existence of slavery as a recognised institution in Chinese domestic life is to me an altogether new idea, and yet I now learn that it is a most real fact—a system of absolute, hereditary slavery, from which there is no possibility of escape for three generations, though the great-grandson of the original slave is entitled to purchase his freedom if he can raise a sum equal to the price at which his master values him. The slave-market is supplied from the families of rebels, and of poor parents who in very hard times are driven to sell their sons and daughters. Many also are the children of gamblers who are sold to pay gambling debts. A large number have been kidnapped from distant homes, and though this offence is criminal, it is constantly practised. Under pressure of extreme poverty, girls are sometimes sold for about £1, but the average price of both sexes ranges from £10 to £20, according to health, strength, beauty, and age. Before a purchase is effected, the slave, male or female, is minutely examined, and made to go through his, or her, paces, to prove soundness in all respects. Should the result prove satisfactory, the purchaser becomes absolute owner of soul and body. He can sell his slave again at any moment, and for any purpose; or should he see fit to beat him to death or drown him, no law can touch him, for his slave is simply his chattel, and possesses no legal rights whatsoever. Instances have actually come to light in which ladies have thus beaten their female slaves to death, but the action is looked upon merely as an extravagant waste of saleable property. In wealthy houses, where there are generally from twenty to thirty slaves, kindly treatment seems to be the general rule; but in smaller families, where only two or three are kept, the treatment is often so harsh that slaves run away, whereupon the town-crier is sent through the streets to offer a reward for the capture of the fugitive. He attracts attention by striking a gong, to which is attached a paper streamer on which all particulars are inscribed. Sometimes street placards are pasted up, with a full description of the runaway. Here, as in other slave-owning communities, parents have no rights whatever to their own children, who can be taken from them and sold at the will of the master. So the system of

slavery is absolute, and its victims may be the children of fellow-citizens, and in the case of gamblers, of boon companions.

Our next visit was to the "City Wall," from which it was possible to obtain a sort of general notion of the lie of the land, and how the walled Tartar city lies within the heart of the Civil city. (The latter has a circumference of eight miles, and a walk right round it on the walls is an excellent way to obtain a bird's-eye view of the surroundings.) The inner city is garrisoned by a strong force of Tartar troops, while the military police garrison the gateways of the outer city.

The city is divided into thirty-six wards, each separated from the others by those fire-proof walls to which I have alluded. At short intervals I notice a tall scaffolding in connection with a little watch-tower, and I learn that these are fire look-outs. Each watchman has a gong whereby to give the alarm to all the others in case he detects a fire, and by a certain code of striking he makes known in what quarter it lies. Then from each of the forty-eight guard-houses of the city two men hurry off to assist the regular fire-brigade, who are said to be a very efficient and courageous body of men, both here and throughout the empire; and indeed there is every inducement to energy in subduing fires, for, apart from all general considerations concerning danger to life and property, every official in the neighbourhood knows that his personal rank is at stake, as every fire sufficiently large to destroy ten houses must be reported at Pekin, and should the conflagration have been allowed so to spread that eighty houses have been burnt, every officer in the city is degraded one step.

Very severe punishment is also meted out to those persons through whose carelessness the fire has originated. No matter how respectable is their position in life, they are condemned to stand daily in the open streets for a period of from one to four weeks, wearing the ponderous wooden collar—the *cangue*—just as if they were thieves.

Here and there, as we passed through the city, we came on traces of a terrific tornado, which one day last spring[1] swept across the city, marking its course by the total demolition of all it touched—a roadway of utter devastation, nowhere exceeding 200 yards in width, yet utterly destroying upwards of nine thousand native houses, two large temples, and property of immense value. *At the very lowest estimate, upwards of ten thousand persons* lay buried beneath the ruins of their own houses; and considering the

[1] April 11, 1878.

crowded population of the native dwellings, this is probably far below the mark. For instance, it was known that in one large eating-house upwards of one hundred and fifty people were quietly dining, when, without one moment's warning, the house fell with an awful crash, and buried them all beneath its ruins. Elsewhere two large temples were shaken to their foundations, every pillar cracked, the roofs broken in, but the idols left sitting uninjured. In another place the great wall of a temple was overthrown, and buried a whole row of small houses, with fully one hundred inhabitants. So sharply defined was the course of the wind, that in places one side of a street stood uninjured, while the other lay in a chaotic mass of ruin.

And this was literally the work of a few moments. One minute all seemed perfectly secure—the stormy weather which had prevailed for some time previously seemed to have abated; no symptom whatever warned the busy citizens of the awful blast that, one moment later, swept over the peaceful city, leaving ruin, death, and utter desolation on its track. For some days previously there had been incessant thunder-storms, accompanied by heavy rain and occasional hail-showers—the hail on the morning of the tornado falling in pieces described by English witnesses as being like pigeons' eggs. The thunder, too, roared ceaselessly.

In the afternoon there came a lull—a strange brooding stillness. Suddenly about 3 P.M. a sound was heard as of a rushing mighty wind—a loud, awful, shrieking blast. Those living on the river-bank looked southward, and beheld a dense cloud of dust, leaves, branches, birds, and objects of every description, rapidly moving towards the city. In a moment it was sweeping over the green isle—the Shameen. It passed through the middle of the foreign settlement, destroying about a dozen houses, and uprooting, or seriously injuring, about two hundred of the carefully-cherished large trees. It swept the river, capsizing or crushing to atoms hundreds of boats, each of which was the home of a whole family, most of whom perished. One boat was lifted from the canal to the top of a house in the city. The river and creeks were fairly blocked with broken fragments. A junk, with about one hundred people on board, sank in the river; large blocks of hewn stone were torn up from the roadway. A strong iron lamp-post in front of this house was twisted like a corkscrew, but the house itself only lost a few slates! Others were greatly damaged. All this was the work of eleven minutes.

Then the destroying angel (or dragon!) passed onwards in a

devious course, but confining the work of desolation to the same narrow limits—a belt of less than 200 yards wide. The Chinese marked with wonder that, though the whirlwind passed right through the quarter where the various Christian Missions are established, not one was injured. It passed close to the London Mission, destroying a house just beyond, then made its way between the homes of the American Presbyterian and English Wesleyan Missions; but not one house belonging to these was injured, nor was a single life lost in the foreign settlement. To add to the consternation of the people, five fires broke out simultaneously, and raged for many hours ere they could be subdued, the loud beating of the fire-alarm gongs adding to the general confusion and terror. Then came the terrible task of recovering and burying the dead, one item of charitable aid coming in the form of a gift of four thousand coffins from a Chinese benevolent society.

CHAPTER III.

A VERY STRANGE CITY.

Roman Catholic cathedral—A disputed site—Recent persecutions—Walk on the walls—Evening service—The home of a great mandarin—The great market for jade-stone—Jade-mines—A water-street—Sucking-pig market—Pursuing creditors—A concert of larks—An idol procession—Pagodas at a fancy-ball—The boat population—Dirty water—Water police—All manner of market boats—Flower boats—Floating hotels—Floating temples—Leper boats—Duck-boats—Duck-hatching establishments—Goose-rearing gardens—Dwarfing trees—The Ocean Banner Monastery—Cremation of priests—The City of the Dead—Lepers at funerals—Monasteries on the White Cloud Mountains.

Sunday Night.

THIS has been a long day full of interest, with very varied Sunday fare!

I first accompanied my hostess to the eight o'clock Mass for Chinese women, at a Roman Catholic church in the heart of the city. To reach it, we passed through an endless succession of very narrow, very busy, and most picturesque streets, in curious contrast with the stillness of the church, which was crowded with a very devout female congregation. A succession of Masses for men had

been celebrated at intervals from 5 A.M., and at the close of the women's service one for foreigners was to follow. Bishop Gilman was present. A French priest was celebrant, and the acolytes were small Chinese boys. The women sang hymns in Chinese.

On our homeward way we turned aside to see the splendid new Roman Catholic cathedral, where it struck me as strangely incongruous to find all the builders and carpenters hard at work. But the Church of Rome adapts her requirements to circumstances, and as Sunday labour is the rule of the heathen Chinese, it is not deemed needful to interrupt even church-building! The cathedral is a handsome structure of solid granite—a fine specimen of Perpendicular Gothic.

With many nervous qualms, and inward appeals to my head to keep steady, I ascended the steep inclined planes of scaffolding, till I reached a good standing-ground just above the west door, whence the view is very extensive and very fine. The country all round being so flat, even this moderate elevation commands an immeasurable horizon bounded only in one direction by the White Cloud hills, while all around, as on a map, lies outspread this vast city, with its sea of dark-tiled roofs, all wellnigh level, save where the hundred square pawn-towers, or some tall pagoda, or here and there some slightly raised temple roof, breaks the uniform monotony which Chinese superstition considers so essential, as securing to all alike an equable distribution of the good influences of Wind and Water—the mysterious Fung-Shui.

Viewed from this light only, one can well understand the abhorrence with which the population watch the erection of these two great twin steeples, which, when finished, will so far overtop all their highest buildings, and make this temple of "the French religion," as they call it, the most prominent object in the city.

They have, however, another most serious cause of complaint, in what they declare to have been the unjust manner in which the site was obtained. When the city was captured by the French and English allies, a clause was inserted in the treaty stipulating that all sites ever held by Roman Catholic missions should be restored to them. The treaty was no sooner signed than forgotten deeds of conveyance of land in Chinese cities (which had been granted to the Jesuits in the early part of the seventeenth century by the Emperor Kang-he, ere they so unfortunately made themselves obnoxious by meddling in politics) were forwarded from the Vatican.

These included eighteen acres of land in Canton itself, on which,

for several generations, had stood the Governor's official residence, which had been reduced to ruins in the bombardment. Viceroy Yeh himself had been effectually disposed of, and the Chinese authorities protested and remonstrated in vain, while a cordon of French soldiers was stationed round the land thus claimed, so that if might could not make right, at least possession might prove nine points of the law. So now the stately cathedral has arisen—in itself a thing of beauty, but in the eyes of the citizens a constant reminder of injustice and robbery which may yet lead to a repetition of the massacre of Tien-tsin.[1]

We returned to the Shameen for breakfast, and then to the English service in the Episcopal church.

After luncheon I accompanied my host and hostess for a long pleasant walk on the city walls, obtaining most interesting views of the densely crowded city within, and of the lines of intersecting wall which divide it into the various anti-fire wards. We wandered on for about three miles, passing the Flowery Pagoda, the Canton and Whampoa Pagodas, and finally reached a great five-storied building to the summit of which we climbed, and so obtained another excellent view of the surroundings.

We also visited a temple with a green-tiled roof, in which an

[1] Though the cathedral has as yet escaped the retributive rage of the mob, French aggression has been sorely visited on a multitude of unoffending native Christians, both Roman Catholic and Protestant. In the summer of 1884, scores of chapels and schools belonging to various societies were attacked and looted. Many of the luckless converts were cruelly beaten, their children stolen from them, their property seized, and their houses dismantled and burnt. Hundreds of families were thus rendered homeless. Appeals to the local magistrates (for the protection which by the English treaty they are bound to extend to all native Christians when persecuted on account of their faith) were all in vain, as these positively refused to interfere, assuring the Christians that they richly deserved death as the penalty for adopting the religion of foreigners.

From other districts several thousand Roman Catholics, being driven from their work and from their homes, fled for refuge to Macao and Hong-Kong. Consequently there are now villages in the neighbourhood of Canton left utterly depopulated.

Writing on this subject, the correspondent of the 'Daily News' stated:—"*Canton*, Oct. 13, 1884: The English and American Protestant missions have sustained serious losses, and their converts have been bitterly persecuted. No lives have been sacrificed, but homes have been broken up, men have been brutally beaten, and women, stripped of their clothing, and with the sword above their heads, have been required to renounce their faith. *We have been accustomed to think dubiously of the conversion of Chinese to the Christian faith, but the firmness which they have displayed in the midst of these trying persecutions can only be regarded as strong evidence of their sincerity.*"

Those who for years have been intimately acquainted with the daily lives of these native Christians needed no such test to convince them of their sincerity—or rather, they have seen them sorely tried over and over again; but, of course, the persecution of a few individuals does not often attract public attention in such a manner as when political questions invest all such details with general interest.

object of interest is a sacred black wooden dog with one horn on its forehead. It is adorned with votive offerings of pink cloth.

We were not sorry to avail ourselves of our strong human ponies for the return journey, especially as I had trysted to accompany Mrs Chalmers to an evening service at a private house in the city, where the missionaries of all denominations, who have all day been teaching in Chinese, meet every Sunday evening to worship together in English. We walked along the canal and through the city, just at sunset, and found about forty persons assembled for a nicely conducted and hearty service.

At its close we walked back through the very dark streets, with apparently no reason for any anxiety, the people being all quite civil. Some of the streets, lighted with painted glass or horn lamps, silk-fringed or gay paper lanterns, were most picturesque, and as full of busy shop-life as when we started in the morning. In some places we came on crowds gambling for cash or small pieces of food.

As we emerged from the closely packed houses to the street facing the canal, a great yellow moon was rising, and reflected on the waters, where lie many house-boats, each the home of a family.

We paused awhile to watch the scene, but a chilling miasma floated up from the waters, bidding us hurry onward, wondering how the boat-children escape croup and diphtheria!

Monday, 13*th Jan.*

A very wealthy mandarin having invited Mrs Lind to bring her foreign friend to his house, I have had a capital opportunity of seeing the interior of a genuine Chinese home of the very best type, and very puzzling it would be to describe. It covers so much ground, and there are so many open halls, consisting chiefly of pillars and ornamental roofs, scattered promiscuously about, among paved courtyards, decorated with flowers in pots; and then there are walls pierced by oddly shaped portals, formed like octagons, or circles, or even teapots, and all placed at irregular intervals, never opposite one another; and then shady morsels of garden with all manner of surprises in the way of little ponds and angular bridges and quaint trees. Then somehow, quite unexpectedly, you find yourself in highly ornamental suites of small rooms which seem to have originally been one great room, subdivided by partitions of the most elaborate wood-carving, and furnished with beautiful polished blackwood, and hangings of rich materials.

Such homes are in fact the patriarchal encampment of a whole

clan, to which all the sons and brothers of the house bring their wives, and there take up their quarters, living together apparently in very remarkable peace.

As no ladies except those connected with the missions ever attempt to master Chinese, and as a very few Chinese gentlemen and no ladies can speak English, or even the barbarous jargon known as pigeon-English, Mrs Lind took her amah to interpret for us. We were received by our host and half-a-dozen gentlemen of the family, and for some time we sat in a fine open reception-hall, drinking pale straw-coloured tea in its simple form, and playing with a nice small son, the hope of the house.

Presently our host (who is very friendly to foreigners, and from intercourse with them is less punctilious than most Chinamen on the matter of being seen speaking to his women-folk) led us aside, and presented us to his most kindly and courteous old mother, who conducted us to her apartments, her son accompanying us. He then introduced us to his little bride, aged thirteen. His matrimonial ventures have so far been unlucky, two previous wives having died very early. This one seems a nice, bright little lady.

She was very highly rouged, as was also her sister-in-law. Another sister being indisposed, was not rouged, nor was the mother, and, therefore, pleasanter to our eyes; but the Canton ladies love to lay on the colour thick. There is no deception about it! it is good honest red, laid thick upon the cheek, and carried right round the eyebrows. The latter are shaved to refine their form. They cannot understand why English ladies should abstain from such an embellishment. Only when in mourning do they refrain from its use, and one notable exception is that of a bride, who on her wedding-day may wear no rouge, so that when her red silk veil is removed and the fringe of artificial pearls raised, her husband, looking on her face for the first time, may know for certain what share of beauty unadorned has fallen to his lot!

But of all eccentricities of personal decoration, the oddest, I think, is that of gilding the hair, which, I am told, young Canton girls do on very full-dress occasions. Certainly I do remember a time when some English ladies powdered their hair with gold dust, but then they owned golden locks to start with, whereas these are all black, and glossy as the raven's wing.

Our host next led us into his fine large garden, which is all dotted over with delightful little summer-houses, with picturesque double roofs much curved up, and with a wealth of fine wood-carving—beautiful blackwood furniture like polished ebony, with

scarlet embroidered draperies; here and there a window of delicate pearly oyster-shells set in a fine lattice-work, so as to form a translucent screen. Shady trees overhang cunningly-contrived miniature streams and lakes, with fanciful bridges, one of which is constructed in zigzags, as an emblem of the much-esteemed dragon. It is a wonderful garden to be the property of a private citizen in the heart of this great crowded city!

The dragon-bridge and the quaintly-shaped portals are not the only lucky emblems which are here cherished. A couple of tame deer, which symbolise happiness, and several gorgeous peacocks, which denote exalted rank, enliven the garden. Some geese are also admitted as being emblematic of constancy, for which reason they figure among the gifts of a bridegroom to his bride.

Returning to the house, or rather to one of its many scattered portions, we find an abundant luncheon awaiting us, but only the gentlemen shared it with us. Even the fine old mother could not venture so far to depart from the customs of well-bred Chinese ladies as to cross the threshold, though she just glanced in to see that we were happy. Everything was excellent and abundant and semi-European, some of the party, including our host, using forks, while others preferred chop-sticks. We tasted a spirit called rose wine, and our hosts enjoyed good English sherry. There was much health-drinking, quite in what we should call old English style, which here, however, is genuine old Chinese style. Gentlemen pledge one another in brimming wine-cups of small exquisitely chased metal-work, and having drained the cup, they turn it upside down on the table (which table, of course, has no cloth)—a white table-cloth would be deemed a most unlucky symbol of mourning.

Leaving the gentlemen to finish their wine, we rejoined the ladies, who now, in the absence of any lord of the creation, were much more at their ease. They were sitting, as is their custom, in one of their bedrooms (also handsomely furnished with polished blackwood and beautifully carved bedsteads). They gathered round us to examine such jewels as we wore, and to show us theirs, and were pleased by our admiration of their quaint and very elaborate head-dressing, their glossy hair being ornamented with artificial flowers (one had natural flowers), and valuable hair-pins of gold, pearl, or jade-stone. Some wore butterflies of the kingfishers' feather jewellery, but the principal ladies wore necklaces and bracelets of clear, bright-green jade, the Chinese equivalent of diamonds. One lady who wore large pendants of jade as ear-rings, and also attached to the silken cord of her

fan, was the proud owner of enormously long third and fourth finger-nails on the left hand. These were shielded by golden nail-protectors—excellent weapons for the infliction of a vicious scratch! They are simply half-thimbles about three inches in length. I have invested in a very pretty silver set of four.

All these ladies wore the same excess of jewellery covering the back of the head, but a singular prejudice forbids a woman ever to cover the top of her head, even when out of doors; so they think our hats very eccentric indeed, though these town ladies understand that it is not indecorous for foreign women to wear such headgear.

There is just one exception to this otherwise general rule, namely, that if a lady is of sufficiently high rank to attend court, she then appears in a hat precisely similar to that which her husband is entitled to wear, and adorned with the coloured button which denotes his exact rank. The mother of our host being entitled to this honour, has had her portrait painted in oils, in full court-dress, with beautiful symbolic embroidery of birds, and a handsome rosary of jade-stone, such as is worn by high mandarins.

We also unfeignedly admired these ladies' exquisitely embroidered silken skirts, all of different colours, and all folded into tiny plaits. These skirts are worn one above the other. But their chief pride evidently centred in their poor little "golden lily" feet, reduced to the tiniest hoof in proof of their exalted station. Of course, the so-called foot is little more than just the big toe, enclosed in a dainty wee shoe, which peeps out from beneath the silk-embroidered trousers. Whether to call attention to these beauties, or as an instinctive effort to relieve pain, I know not, but we observe that a favourite attitude in the zenana is to cross one leg over the other, and nurse the poor deformed foot in the hand.

As they could scarcely toddle without help, their kindly-looking, strong, large-footed attendants were at hand, ready to act as walking-sticks or ponies, as might be desired. However ungraceful in our eyes is the tottering gait of these ladies when attempting to walk, it is certainly not so inelegant as the mode of transport which here is the very acme of refined fine-ladyism. The lady mounts on the back of her amah, whom she clasps round the neck with both her arms, while the amah holds back her hands, and then grasps the knees of her mistress. Very fatiguing for the poor human pony, who sometimes is called upon to carry this awkward burden for a considerable distance, at the end of which it is the

lady, not the amah, who refreshes her exhausted strength with a few whiffs from a long tobacco-pipe!

To-day the only work of the attendants was to fan us, and assiduously feed us with luscious preserved fruits and cakes, which it would have been deemed uncourteous to refuse, though it was terrible to have to swallow so many. One or two would really have been enjoyable, but here hospitality involves surfeit. It was a delightful relief when one of the amahs brought in a basket of pumeloes (the huge pink-fleshed citron), whose sweet acid flavour was a blessed change; and then another woman produced some of the nut-like seeds of the lotus plant, which are very nice. Chinese hospitality is only satisfied so long as the mouth of the guest is well filled.

One of the older ladies of the last generation was suffering from headache, and as a cure she wore a circular patch of black plaister on each temple. We very soon felt that the like fate would be ours were we to stay much longer in the small crowded room, where the atmosphere was most oppressive for lack of ventilation, though it is hard to see why it should be so, as there are no doors in any Chinese house, only open portals embellished with the highest open-work carving, and there is much carved lattice-work all about the place.

As soon as we could venture, we rose to take our leave, which is necessarily a slow process, as in any case Chinese politeness requires the hosts to make every effort for the detention of their guests, and in the case of such *raræ aves* as ourselves, I have no doubt the regret at parting was genuine. When at last we had successfully manœuvred our way out, hospitality still followed us in the form of baskets of fruit and of rice-cakes made with burnt sugar.

Jan. 14*th.*

I have had the good fortune to have a long day in the city with Mr Chalmers of the London Mission, who, having been at work here for a quarter of a century, and having a keen interest in the manners and customs of the land in which he lives (which is by no means a necessary sequence of long residence!), is a delightful companion on such a ramble, and I need scarcely say that really to enjoy such an expedition, one must go quietly on foot, with all powers of observation on the alert, never knowing what strange novelty will entail a halt at any moment.

We started at sunrise, but already the tide of busy life was well

astir in the narrow streets of shops, through which we walked on our way to the great market for jade-stone, which is held daily at early morning in the open air near the temple of the Five Hundred Disciples, and closes before ordinary mortals are astir.

Considering the extraordinary value which attaches to this precious mineral, I was chiefly amazed at the enormous quantity which we saw offered for sale. Not only is the market itself (a very large square building) entirely filled with stalls exclusively for the sale of objects manufactured from jade, but many of the surrounding streets are lined with open booths and shops for the same object; and truly, though every Chinese woman who can possibly obtain a jade ornament delights in it, as a European or an American glories in her diamonds, the prices are so prohibitive that it is difficult to imagine how a sale can be obtained for such a mass of bracelets and brooches, ear-rings and finger-rings, and especially of very ornamental pins for the hair.

Here poor women and middle-class tradesmen who cannot afford the genuine article solace themselves with imitation gems of green glass, or some such composition, which take the place of spurious diamonds, and effectually deceive the untrained eye. But at this market, I believe, only the genuine article is sold. We saw specimens of very varied colours, from a semi-opaque cream or milky-white tint to the clearest sea-green, or a dark hue the colour of blood-stone.

I am told that it is all imported from the Kuen-luen mountains in Turkestan, where there are mines of this mineral—the only mines in the world which are worked, so far as is known. It has thence been brought to China as an article of tribute from the earliest times of which even the Celestials have any record, and so highly have they prized it that they have jealously striven to keep it entirely in their own hands. It is, however, thought possible that as this mineral is not known to occur anywhere in Europe,[1] jade-

[1] It has recently been proved that jade does exist not only in Europe, but even in our own isles. Though its cradle remains a mystery, fragments have been found in the glacial drift of Northern Germany—some near Potsdam, and one large block at Schwensal, near Leipzig. But specially interesting to ourselves is the fact, proved by Mr C. G. Leland, that among the pretty green pebbles offered for sale by the children on the island of Iona, some are undoubtedly real jade of the best quality—namely, of the transparent clear dark-green hue, which is so greatly prized by the Chinese. In fact, his attention was first aroused by the extreme interest evinced by some Chinese gentlemen to whom he presented a few of these pebbles, telling them how of old pilgrims to "the holy isle" carried these home as mementoes. Mr Leland thinks it probable that in prehistoric times fetiches were made of the jade here obtained, and that thus, perhaps, Iona first acquired its pre-Christian reputation for sanctity.—See chapter on Iona, in 'In the Hebrides,' p. 99, by C. F. Gordon Cumming. Chatto & Windus.

celts, which have been found in European lake-dwellings, and other prehistoric remains, have probably travelled thither as barter, in the course of the great Aryan westward migration from the highlands of Central Asia. Tradition affirms that the Aryans regarded the wearing of a jade ornament as the most effectual charm against lightning, a faith which would naturally account for their carrying with them many such treasures.

So in Hindostan, though specimens of carved jade inlaid with rubies and diamonds were among the priceless treasures of the Mogul Emperors, there is no reason to believe that this mineral has ever been found in the Empire, and it is supposed that the raw material must have been brought from those same mines, of which there are considerably over a hundred, one great mountain-side being riddled by dark tunnels, which are the entrances to long winding galleries, excavated in every direction, and in some cases piercing right through the mountain to its farther side. The jade is found in veins which are sometimes several feet in depth, but it is so full of fissures that it is rare to obtain a perfect block more than a few inches thick. Hence the great value of large pieces when found without a flaw. Such are reserved for the Imperial tribute, and the Emperor himself awards such blocks to the artist who is most certain to do it justice, the natural form of the block deciding what shall be the character of the sculpture.

Such an Imperial commission is equivalent to a life-work, for although, when first broken from its rocky bed, the jade may be scratched with an ordinary knife, it soon hardens, so as to become the most difficult of minerals for the sculptor's art. Hence, such vases and other ornaments as became so familiar to us after the looting of the Summer Palace, each represented twenty or thirty years of ceaseless toil at the hands of a patient and most diligent worker. And yet I have seen some of these priceless art-treasures in British homes, where their value in this respect seems undreamt of.

The Chinese name of the stone is Yu-shek, and that by which we call it is said to be a corruption of a Spanish word referring to a superstition of the Mexican Indians, who deemed that to wear a bracelet of this stone was the surest protection against all diseases of the loins: hence the Spaniards named the mineral *Piedra di hijada* (stone of the loins), by which name it became known in Europe, and ere long was contracted to its present form. Where the Mexicans obtained their specimens is not known, mineralogists having failed to discover this mineral on the American continent.

New Zealand, however, has supplied her own jade in the form of great pebbles, which with infinite labour have been wrought into those large celts and grotesque amulets which formed the most priceless possessions of the high chiefs.

As a matter of course, in this daily market of the modern work produced in the jade-cutters' street, we saw no specimens of very artistic work—such can rarely come into the market; but the prices of even simple thumb-rings or ear-rings are so great, that I had to console myself by the thought that I could get much more show for my money by investing in some very pretty vases of a cheap green stone mounted in well-carved stands of polished blackwood.

It really is amazing to think of the value of the goods offered for sale on those stalls of rough wooden planks! The real price—not the price asked with a view to its being beaten down, in the wearisome manner in which all shopping is here conducted, but the price which a Chinese mandarin would pay for a string of really good bright-green beads—might be £1000! For two buttons suitable for his use he would pay £30. The most costly colour is a vivid green like that of a young rice-field, and for a really good specimen of this, £500 or £600 is sometimes paid for a personal ornament of very moderate size.

A large amount of the jade offered for sale in the market is quite in the rough, and here the lapidaries come to select such pieces as seem likely to be sound and of good colour throughout. It is extremely interesting to see these men at work in their primitive shops, which form a whole street by themselves. First the rough block is placed between two sawyers, who saw it in two by the horizontal movement of a saw of steel wire, with bow-shaped handle. From time to time they drop a thin paste of emery powder and water along the line they purpose cutting. These reduced portions are then passed on to other men, who work with small circular saws, and thus fashion all manner of ornaments.

Not very far from this street, there is one wholly inhabited by silk-weavers, whose hand-looms are of the most primitive description. A little farther lies a curious water-street, a sort of Chinese Venice, where the houses edge a canal so closely that the people step from their doors into boats. This canal runs straight to one of the water-gates, by which all the market-boats enter the city every morning. These gates, being the portals beneath which the canal flows through the city walls, are closed at night, so all boats arriving after sunset must lie outside till morning; and great is

the rush when at sunrise the portcullis is raised, and each boat seeks to enter first.

Amongst the produce thus brought to the daily market are sucking-pigs in search of a mother, as Chinese farmers do not care to allow one mother to suckle more than a dozen little piggies, whereas bountiful nature occasionally sends a litter nearly double that number. So whenever the births exceed the regulation limit, a litter of the supernumeraries is conveyed to the sucking-pig market, which is held daily in the early morning, and there the farmer whose sties have not been so abundantly blessed, buys a few of the outcasts to make up his number. But lest the maternal sow should object to adopting the little strangers, her own babies are taken from her, and placed with the new-comers, when all are sprinkled with wine. When the combined litter is restored to the anxious parent, she is so bamboozled by the delightful fragrance of the whole party, that she forgets to count them (or fears she may be seeing double), so she deems it prudent "to keep a calm sough," as we say in the north, and accepts the increased family without comment!

Of course, in passing through the shop streets I could not resist many a halt, while my good guardian, with inexhaustible patience, explained to me the use or meaning of sundry objects, which to me were all strange curios. In many of the shops an unusual willingness to sell goods at reasonable prices plainly indicates the approach of the New Year, as do also the number of street-stalls for the sale of small curios, inasmuch as it is a positive necessity for all accounts to be settled before the close of the Old Year, and therefore a tradesman will sometimes even sell at a loss, in order to realise the sum necessary to meet his liabilities. Should he fail to do so, he is accounted disgraced, his name is written on his own door as a defaulter, his business reputation is lost, and no one will henceforth give him credit.

I believe that debts which are not settled on New Year's eve cannot subsequently be recovered, for a curious custom exists whereby a creditor who has vainly pursued a debtor all through the night may still follow him after daybreak, provided he continues to carry his lighted lantern, as if he believed it was still night. This, however, is his last chance.

We wandered on from shop to shop, and from temple to temple, till I was fairly bewildered. But one scene remains vividly before my memory as the finest subject for a picture that I have seen in Canton. It is in the western suburbs, close to the temples of the

Gods of War and of Literature, and of the Queen of Heaven (in one of which I was especially fascinated by the multitude of small figures, carved and gilt, which adorn the roof, the sides of the temple, and the altar). Standing on the temple-steps, you look along the street, and combine a picturesque bridge with an arched gateway of the fire-wall spanning the highway. It is in such a quiet quarter that I think I shall be able to secure a drawing of the scene.[1]

Of course, in arranging to sketch near a temple, the chances of quiet depend on the day, as every god has his day, when the whole population crowd to do him homage, and then the neighbouring streets, however dull on other occasions, are decorated and thronged. I am told that one of the prettiest of these festivals will occur in the middle of April, in honour of the very beneficent and popular god, Paak-tai, who has at various times been incarnate upon the earth for the good of mankind. One of these incarnations occurred after the deluge which destroyed the whole world in the reign of the Chinese Emperor Yaou, B.C. 2357 (a date which closely corresponds with that of the universal Deluge recorded in the Hebrew Scriptures, and noted in our chronology as B.C. 2349). After this terrible flood all knowledge of agriculture, art, and science was lost, so Paak-tai came back to earth to instruct the survivors.

The really pretty and unique feature of his festival is that, on three successive evenings, all his worshippers bring their pet singing-birds (generally larks, which they habitually carry about with them in their pretty cages, just as Englishmen go out accompanied by their dogs. I am not sure, however, that a Briton would appreciate the trouble of always carrying his pet, as the Celestials do !)

Thus a crowd of several hundred larks is assembled, and all are brought into the brilliantly illuminated temple. The cages (which are covered for the occasion) are suspended from horizontal bamboos, so that presently the whole temple is full of them. On a given signal, all the coverings are removed, and the astonished larks, supposing that they have overslept themselves, and allowed the sun to rise without the tribute of their morning hymn, make up for lost time by bursting forth into a most jubilant chorus of song, which they keep up for about a couple of hours, greatly to the delight of the human crowd, rich and poor, and of the beneficent deity who is thus honoured. So these people who enlist the

[1] The innumerable interests of Canton, especially the crowds assembled for the New Year, prevented my even devoting a day to the subject. I therefore bequeath this discovery to some more resolute artist.

breezes and the streams to sound the bells which chime the praises of Buddha, teach the birds also to do their part in the general thanksgiving.

On the third and last evening of the bird concert, the festival concludes with the most gorgeous procession. First come huge lanterns, on each of which is inscribed the name of the god; then a number of gay banners embroidered with scenes in his history. Then come several score of tiny children splendidly dressed to represent characters in the old legends; these are mounted on little ponies, and led by attendants in rich silken robes. They are children of wealthy parents, who deem it an honour to take part in the festival. The children's interest is sustained by frequent pauses, when they are fed with cakes and sweetmeats. In the procession are carried several canopied shrines, some of carved and polished blackwood, containing the images of the god and of his parents; others are more ornamental, and are covered with figures apparently enamelled, but really made of lovely kingfishers' feathers. These shrines contain only beautiful objects, such as old bronze or jade-stone vases, which are lent by the owners to grace the procession. All along the road where the procession is to pass, the people prepare small altars outside their doors, and make offerings to the idol as it is carried past, sometimes pouring libations of wine on to the ground.

Our last, but not least, curious experience on this morning of strange sights was a visit to one of the innumerable shops devoted solely to the manufacture of pasteboard models of every conceivable object, from a doll-house ten feet square to a good large pony, boots, hats, sedan-chairs, but above all money,—all with a view to supplying offerings of burnt-sacrifice to the spirits of the dead. Just at present some less reverent foreigners have enlisted the services of these purveyors of Hades in that of their own amusement, for there is a fancy-ball in prospect, at which one gentleman purposes appearing as Punch, another as a gigantic black bottle marked "Bass's Pale Ale," while two young ladies who have not yet "come out," but are determined to see the fun, have solved the problem of how to "stay in" without missing the ball, by ordering two tall seven-storied pagodas, made of bamboo and pasteboard, within which they will remain securely hidden, peeping out through cunningly contrived windows. Surely a quainter device than that of a brace of locomotive pagodas never was invented!

Jan. 17*th.*

The masked fancy-ball came off last night, and was very amusing. There were nearly fifty people—some very pretty characters and some very funny ones. Most of the gentlemen wore Chinese masks for the first half-hour. The young ladies in the pagodas were highly successful, but ere long found their tall prisons so very hot that they were allowed to transgress all rules, and "came out" before their time.

Each day slips by full of many interests, even when we go no farther than the limits of this green isle, but sit watching the infinitely varied boats or junks gliding past with their great brown or yellow sails; or else, at sunset, doing "joss-pigeon," throwing burning gilt paper into the river, as an offering to the Water Dragon, firing noisy crackers to keep off evil spirits, or lighting sweet incense-sticks and candles to place on the tiny boat altar.

I often linger on the embankment to watch these, till I am conscious of a cold mist rising, and am glad to retreat to a cheery fireside—not without a thought of pity for the children who can never know the meaning of that word.

Jan. 18*th.*

The miasma, which on these really chill nights rises from the rivers and canals, is by no means the sole danger which these little ones survive! One of the most apparent is the amazing amount of diluted filth which they swallow! I observe here the same peculiarity which struck me so forcibly at Benares—namely, the large amount of washing of clothes which is done, but the utter indifference to the condition of the water used for the purpose.

All these thousands of boats which lie moored in compact phalanx along the shores of the river (at the mouths of creeks which are little better than sewers), get their water-supply by just dipping their bucket overboard, although they could easily obtain comparatively pure water in mid-stream! And this terribly unclean water is used unfiltered for all cooking purposes!

Considering our own terrible experiences of how luxurious homes in Britain have been left desolate by a draught of sparkling water into which, all unheeded, some taint of drainage had filtered, or even from the use of milk-vessels washed in such water, it does seem amazing that all this goes on with impunity, and that the whole population does not die wholesale in consequence—a wonderful proof of the safeguard of only drinking boiled water, as is the Chinese invariable custom, in the form of tea.

We have plenty of opportunities for watching these people, as the boats lie moored around us in every direction, so that even without our leaving the shore they are always before our eyes, and whenever we go an expedition on the river, we necessarily pass through crowds of boats, innumerable and indescribable, and some are very ornamental. Of their number some idea may be formed from the fact that the boating population of Canton alone is estimated at three hundred thousand persons, who possess no other home—whose strange life from their cradle to the grave is spent entirely on the rivers, with the dipping of the oars, or the tremulous quiver of the long steering-scull, as the ceaseless accompaniment of all life's interests. This is especially true of the women, who work the boats, for many of the men work on land all day, only returning at night to the tiny but exquisitely clean floating home which, though barely twenty feet in length, probably shelters three generations!

These are the sampans, or slipper-shaped boats with movable roofs of rain-proof bamboo basket-work.

Somewhat different from these are the boat-homes of sailors who are absent for months on long voyages on board of ocean-going junks, who return year after year, to find the home in which they were probably born, moored in the self-same spot in one of the multitudinous water-streets, for every boat has its own appointed anchorage; and the municipal regulations affecting the water-population are most minute, and strictly carried out, as indeed must be necessary where so enormous a community is concerned.

For this purpose a special river-magistrate has command of a strong body of water-police, who live in police-boats, and are bound to row about all night, blowing on shrill conch-shells, which are most effectual for awakening peaceful sleepers, and for giving notice of their approach to all evil-doers, more especially to those very daring river-pirates from whose depredations they are bound to protect the public.

These water-constables, however, enjoy a very evil reputation, and are said frequently to be in league with malefactors, accepting bribes from pirates to keep well out of the way when any unusual deed of darkness is in prospect, such as capturing a wealthy citizen while crossing the river at night, and carrying him off as a prisoner until a large ransom can be extracted from his relations, which is one of the cheerful possibilities of life in these parts!

Still more frequently, however, the guardians of the peace are said to levy blackmail on their own account, helping themselves gratis from the market-boats, whose proprietors dare not complain, lest they should be falsely accused of some offence which would lead to their prosecution and imprisonment, quite as certainly as if they were really guilty.

As regards cargo or passenger boats, fines, severe flogging, or imprisonment, or even a combination of all three, await the captain and crew of any boat which neglects to report its movements to the authorities, or which has the misfortune to lose any of its passengers. Should such an one fall overboard and be drowned, the boat or junk is compelled to lie-to or anchor till the corpse has been recovered. Grievous, indeed, is the lot of all concerned should a junk or boat capsize in a squall, more especially if it can be proved that her masts and sails exceeded the regulation size. If, under such circumstances, only one or even two passengers are drowned, the captain alone suffers; but should three perish, the vessel is confiscated, and not only the captain but every man of the crew is condemned to wear the ponderous wooden collar (the *cangue*) for thirty days, and then to endure a judicial flogging!

Our barbaric notion that the captain must be absolute autocrat of his vessel is by no means allowed in China, where the law provides that in the event of an approaching storm, the passengers may require the captain to strike sail and wait till the danger is past. Should he refuse to comply with the requirements of the land-lubbers, he is liable to receive forty blows of a bamboo! but terrible as are Chinese floggings, they are mere trifles compared with the penalty of enduring for three months the tortures of a Chinese prison, as a sequence to shipwreck!

I notice one class of boat which seems to ply a very busy trade, namely, that of the river-barbers, who devote themselves exclusively to shaving and head-scraping their floating customers. Each barber has a tiny boat in which he paddles himself about in and out among the crowd of sampans, attracting attention by ringing a little bell.

The river-doctor likewise gives warning of his whereabouts by means of a bell, so that as he goes on his way he can be called to any one needing his services.

There is not a phase of life on land which has not its counterpart on the river, and every variety of boat has its distinctive name. To begin with, there are whole fleets of market boats, each of which

supplies the boating population with some one article. There are oil boats and firewood boats, rice boats and sugar-cane boats, boats for vegetables and boats for the sale of flowering-plants; there are fruit boats, bean-curd boats, confectioners' boats, shrimp boats, and fish boats; boats for sundry meats, and for pork in particular; boats for the sale of crockery, of salt, or of clothing. Some boats advertise their cargoes by a realistic sign hung from the mast-head —such as an earthenware jar, an oil-cask, a bundle of sugar-cane or of firewood, that their customers may espy them from afar.

There are floating kitchens, provided with an extensive brick-work cooking-range, where most elaborate dinners are cooked; these are served on board of floating dining-halls euphoniously called "flower boats," which are most luxuriously fitted up and highly ornamental, resplendent with a wealth of beautiful wood-carving, often brightly coloured and heavily gilt, and always brilliantly illuminated. These are hired by wealthy citizens who wish to give their friends dinner-parties, as it is not customary to do so at their own homes except on great family festivals; such dinner-parties are enlivened by the presence of richly attired singing-women. Poorer people find one end of the floating kitchen fitted up as a cheap restaurant or tea-house.

There are also floating hotels, which are chiefly for the accommodation of persons arriving after the gates of the city are closed, or who merely wish to trans-ship from one vessel to another. Similar house-boats are hired by wealthy Chinamen as cool summer-quarters, or for going expeditions. For pleasure excursions there are Hong boats answering to Venetian gondolas, with large comfortable saloons adorned with much carving and gilding, but so arranged as to be able to hoist a mast and sail.

In striking contrast with these gay boats are the dull unattractive ones which we may term floating biers, as they are used only for conveying the dead to their place of rest. For though the dwellers on the land allow the boat people no homes ashore during their lifetime, they dare not refuse the dead a resting-place in the bosom of the earth.

Far sadder than these biers, for those whose weary life-struggle is ended, are the leper boats, tenanted by such of the boat-folk as are afflicted with leprosy, that most terrible of diseases, and who are therefore outcasts, forced to live apart from their fellows, and only allowed to solicit alms by stretching out a long bamboo pole, from the end of which is suspended a small bag (just as was done in medieval days by the lepers in Holland, as described in Evelyn's

Diary, A.D. 1641, when he noted "divers leprous poor creatures dwelling in solitary huts on the brink of the water," who asked alms of passengers on the canals by casting out a floating box to receive their gifts). Of course these boats are deemed as wholly unclean as their inmates. Hence, when in 1847 six young English merchants had been brutally murdered at a village in the neighbourhood of Canton, the crowning insult to the hated foreigners was to return the mangled corpses to Canton in a common leper boat.

Then there are ecclesiastical boats,—for though each dwelling-boat has its domestic altar, the public service of the gods is by no means omitted. So a large number of Taouist priests have stationary boat-houses for themselves and their families, the chief saloon being dedicated to sundry Taouist idols. These priests are liable at any moment to be summoned on board other boats to perform religious ceremonies on behalf of the sick, especially such as are supposed to be possessed of evil spirits. They also officiate in floating temples, in which elaborate services are performed on behalf of the souls of drowned persons, or of such beggar-spirits as have been neglected by their descendants.

During these "masses for the dead" the floating shrine is decorated with many white and blue banners, flags, and draperies, to indicate mourning. At other times the flags and decorations are of the gayest, and a band of musicians with shrill pipes and drums produce deafening sounds, all of which tell that the temple has been engaged by two families of the boat community for the solemnisation of a wedding,—for in their marriage, as in all else, these people live wholly apart from those who dwell on land, and although the women are a much nicer, healthier-looking lot than those we see ashore, such a thing as intermarriage is unknown, the boat population being greatly despised.

But of all the multitudinous boats, perhaps the strangest are the duck and geese boats, some of which shelter as many as two thousand birds, which are purchased wholesale at the great duck and geese farms, and reared for the market. After seeing these boats, I no longer wondered at the multitude of these birds in the provision markets, where they form one of the staple foods of the people.

Beyond the first expense of buying the half-grown birds, the owner of the boat incurs none in rearing them, as he simply turns them out twice a-day to forage for themselves along the mud-shores and the neighbouring fields, where they find abundance of dainty

little land-crabs, frogs, and worms, snails, slugs, and maggots. They are allowed a couple of hours for feeding, and are then called back, when they obey with an alacrity which is truly surprising, the pursuit of even the most tempting frog being abandoned in their hurry to waddle on board. Never was there so obedient a school, and it is scarcely possible to believe that this extraordinary punctuality is really attained by the fear of the sharp stroke of a bamboo, which is invariably administered to the last bird.

This afternoon we went a most interesting expedition up the river, and then turned aside into one of the many creeks to the village of Faa-tee, and thence onward in search of the great duck-hatching establishment, where multitudinous eggs are artificially hatched. The first we came to was closed, but the boatmen told us of another farther on, so we landed and walked along narrow ridges between large flooded fields in which lotus and water-chest-nuts are grown for the sake of their edible roots. Both are nice when cooked, but the collecting of these, in this deep mud, must be truly detestable for the poor women engaged in it.

Passing by amazing heaps of old egg-shells (for which even the Chinese seem to have as yet found no use), we reached the hatch-ing-house, in which many thousands of eggs are being gradually warmed in great baskets filled up with heated chaff and placed on shelves of very open basket-work which are arranged in tiers all round the walls, while on the ground are placed earthenware stoves full of burning charcoal. Here the eggs are kept for a whole day and night, the position of the baskets with reference to the stoves being continually changed by attendants who reserve their apparel for use in a cooler atmosphere.

After this preliminary heating, the eggs are removed to other baskets in another heated room, to which they are dexterously carried in cloths, each containing about fifty eggs—no one but a neat-handed Chinaman could carry such a burden without a break-age! Here the eggs remain for about a fortnight, each egg being frequently moved from place to place, to equalise their share of heating. After this they are taken to a third room, where they are spread over wide shelves, and covered with sheets of thick warm cotton. At the end of another fortnight, hundreds of little ducklings simultaneously break their shells, and by evening perhaps a couple of thousand fluffy little beauties are launched into life, and are forthwith fed with rice-water.

Duck-farmers (who know precisely when each great hatching is due) are in attendance to buy so many hundred of these pretty

infants, whom they at once carry off to their respective farms, where there are already an immense number of ducks and geese of different ages, all in separate lots. The geese, by the way, are not hatched artificially, owing to the thickness of their shells, consequently they are not so very numerous as ducks: still flocks numbering six or eight hundred are reared, and are provided with wattle shelves on which to roost, as damp ground is considered injurious to the young birds. A very large goose-market is held every morning in Canton, which is supplied by geese-boats, each of which brings two or three hundred birds.

As to the baby ducks, they are fed on boiled rice, and after a while are promoted to bran, maggots, and other delicacies, till the day comes when the owners of the duck-boats come to purchase the half-grown birds, and commence the process of letting them fatten themselves as aforesaid. This continues till they are ready for the market, and are either sold for immediate consumption, or bought wholesale by the provision dealers, who split, salt, and then dry them in the sun. The heart, gizzard, and entrails are also dried and sold separately, and the bills, tongues, and feet are pickled in brine.

I do not know whether there is always a relay of ducklings at hatching-point, or whether we were especially fortunate in the moment of our visit, but we certainly witnessed a large increase of this odd family. It was so very amusing to watch scores of little beaks breaking their own shells and struggling out, only to be unceremoniously deposited in a basket of new-born infants, that we were tempted to linger long in this strange nursery. At last, however, we summoned resolution to leave the fluffy little darlings, and retraced our way to Faa-tee, where we again landed in order to see some of the gardens for which it is so justly celebrated. There are private gardens of wealthy citizens, and market-gardens, all in the quaint style peculiar to this country. We went to see specimens of each, with lovely camellias, roses, chrysanthemums, daphnes, and narcissus; all these plants are in ornamental pots, arranged in rows along the paths, but not planted out as in our gardens. The narcissus, which, *par excellence*, are called "the New-Year Flowers," are grown in saucers filled with gravel and water. The great pride of a Chinese gardener is to grow many spikes from one bulb, and the more flowers that bloom thereon, the greater is his prospect of success in the coming year. Even branches of fruit-trees are being cut for the market, to supply the much-prized blossoms for the fast-approaching New Year.

But the predominant feature of these gardens lies in the gro-

tesqueness of the figures produced by training certain shrubs over a framework of wire, so as exactly to take its form; and still more wonderful is the revelation of amazing patience which must have been expended in order to train each tiny twig, each separate leaf, into its proper place, so as to form a perfectly even surface, representing garments, or whatever else is to be indicated.

Evergreen dragons, frisky fishes, dolphins with huge eyes of china, and human figures with china or wooden hands, heads, and feet, are among the favourite forms represented. We also saw a very fine vegetable stag, with well-developed antlers; also a long rattan trained into the likeness of a serpent. Different shrubs assume the forms of junks, bridges, and houses, flower-baskets, fans, or birds, and tall evergreen pagodas are adorned with little china bells hanging round each storey.

We also saw a very large number of grotesquely distorted and dwarfed shrubs and trees, the Chinese being wellnigh as expert as the Japanese in this strange sort of gardening. Though no one really knows what is the true secret, I am told that a very effectual method of dwarfing trees is to give the plant no rest, continually to disturb its roots and expose them to the air, and by every means cramp its vitality and luxuriant growth. Certainly the result produced is extraordinary. For these tiny miniatures have every characteristic of the full-grown—indeed, of the aged tree, with gnarled and twisted roots and branches, although the total height is often only a few inches, and the quaint little dwarf stands in a beautiful china vase. Some of the most successful dwarfs are pear-trees and fir-trees. The older they are, the more perfect is their grotesqueness, so that such plants as these are bequeathed from generation to generation.

After a long walk through a New-Year's fair for very poor people, where the attractions consisted chiefly of gilt-paper flowers, and scrolls with lucky mottoes in Chinese characters, we returned to the boat and rowed across the river to the Monastery of the Ocean Banner, or, as it is commonly called by foreigners, the Honam Temple, which is by far the finest thing I have as yet seen in China.

The great gateway is guarded by indescribably hideous demi-gods, but the temple itself is really imposing. But in saying this, I must remind you, once for all, that neither in China nor Japan need you look for beauty of architecture in the sense we generally imply. These temples are one and all of the same type, which is simply that of the one-storied Indian bungalow, with verandah

and heavy roof. Nevertheless, some of the larger temples have a certain solemnity and a wealth of rich colour. In this Honam Temple the interest centres in three colossal figures in a sitting posture, carved in wood and gilded. These represent the three Buddhas of the Past, the Present, and the Future. Before each hangs an ever-burning lamp. Before each also stands a gilded altar, on which are very large altar vases and incense-burners of zinc. On either side of the temple are ranged small gilded images, to represent the sixteen most holy disciples of Buddha, and before each burns an incense brazier. All the minor adjuncts of lanterns, draperies, and temple furnishings are handsome and harmonious.

The afternoon service had just commenced, and though we were told that it was much less fully attended than that of early morning, it was unquestionably an impressive scene. Only about sixty monks and priests were present, instead of the full complement of two hundred. Of these some were robed in yellow, others wore grey skirts and yellow hoods. But what specially struck me was, that instead of leaving one shoulder bare, and the yellow robe covering the other, as in Ceylon, and as in the Cingalese images of Buddha, these men cover both shoulders, having a grey undergarment beneath the sacerdotal yellow.

The abbot wore a purple robe with a mantle of crimson silk, purposely made of patched pieces to suggest the vow of poverty. He and some of the priests carried rosaries of polished black beads.

Some of the chanting was rather fine, but the orchestral accompaniment was anything but solemn, shrill pipes, flutes, and wooden drums combining to produce a hideous noise, which to my uneducated ears was suggestive only of pandemonium—anything but devotional. However, one can never tell what effect anything produces on other folk, and it does not do to judge hastily. Remember that enlightened Persian who found his way to London, and wandered into Westminster Abbey, and then graphically related to his countrymen the overpowering terror which had overwhelmed him when, as he approached the huge idol (whose form he was unable to describe), it had opened its mouth and roared so loud that, overcome with fear, he had fled from the great temple! And yet we have an impression that grand organ music is solemnising!

Here, the ritual, which is all in the ancient sacred Pali language, of which most of the monks are wholly ignorant, seemed chiefly to consist of rapid recitation by all the brethren in unison, accompanied by many genuflexions and prostrations. Then they all

made three processional turns, sunwise, round the inner shrine, and then they turned to the north and prostrated themselves.

The service was lengthy, and we could not stay till the end, having but a limited time to spare, and I was anxious to see the cremation-ground, where those who embrace the religious life are cremated, following the example of their leader. The crematory is a low tower of brick; within are four raised stones on which to rest the bamboo chair wherein (with the monastic cowl drawn over his head, and hands placed palm to palm before his breast, as if in prayer) sits the dead monk, who, within twelve hours of his death, must be carried hither by lay brothers. He is followed to the funeral pyre by all the brethren, walking two and two, clothed in sackcloth, and having a white cloth bound round the head in token of woe. They have previously held solemn service in the temple for the repose of the dead, and as the procession slowly advances they chant funeral hymns.

Through the narrow door of the crematory the chair is carried —fagots are placed beneath and all around it, and the chief priest kindles the flame, all the mourners falling prostrate, with their faces to the ground, while commending the mortal body to the ethereal fire.[1] While the body is being cremated, small pieces of fragrant sandal-wood are from time to time thrown into the flames. Considering the intense anxiety of the whole Chinese nation to secure good burial for their unmaimed bodies, it is very remarkable to find their religious teachers adopting a custom so essentially Aryan.

When the fire has done its work, and only a few charred bones and ashes remain, these are collected in a stone jar and placed beside similar jars in a sepulchral store-house, where they remain till a certain day of the year (the ninth day of the ninth month), when each jar is emptied into a bag of red cloth. These are sewn up, and are then thrown through a small sort of window into a great solid granite mausoleum. There are two of these buildings in the temple grounds; one of them, however, may no longer be used, not for lack of room, but because it already contains 4948 sacks of ashes, and Buddhist law forbids the storing of a larger number in one place.

The Ossuary now in use is divided into two compartments, one of which is assigned to the ashes of Buddhist nuns.

[1] See the ancient Aryan Cremation hymn, which doubtless was chanted at the pyre of Buddha, the Aryan Prince. 'In the Himalayas and on the Indian Plains,' p. 134. By C. F. Gordon Cumming. Chatto & Windus.

It appears that there are exceptional instances when cremation is dispensed with, and ordinary burial in ponderous coffins is lawful even for a priest. Such cases, though rare, have occurred in comparatively recent years, and some very old horse-shoe tombs in the temple grounds prove that such burials were permitted long ago. At present, however, they are being "renewed" in a most literal sense, as the ancient inscriptions are being copied on to brand-new stones!

Leaving the cremation ground, we made our way to the hall where, in a handsome dagoba of white marble, is stored the most precious possession of the monastery—the relic of Buddha!

We turned aside, however, to take a warning on the hideous results of indolence and gluttony, as displayed in the forms of about a dozen monstrously fat sacred pigs, luxuriating in a most comfortable stye, abundance of good food, and happy security from all danger of having their natural lives curtailed.

Then we looked into the great refectory, where eight long narrow tables extend from end to end, four on each side, with benches on one side only, so placed that all the brethren shall face the centre of the hall, at one end of which sits the abbot, at the other there is an altar to some food-god. All round the walls hang boards, on which are inscribed wise maxims from the classics, whereon the brethren may ponder while silently consuming their simple meal of vegetables. It struck us that mind must indeed have triumphed over matter, when hungry Chinamen could pamper pigs and fowls without occasionally dedicating one to the service of the kitchen god (whose shrine, by the way, occupies a conspicuous place in the monastic kitchen). In point of fact, it is said that fat pork is a delicacy which, though positively prohibited, is by no means unknown even at the table of the abbot!

Jan. 20th.

To-day we have had a most lovely expedition to the White Cloud Mountains. After an early breakfast, we started luxuriously in chairs, and, skirting the western suburbs, we entered the city by the west gate, and struck right across the city to the north-east gate—a great double gateway, with a large red guard-house, beyond which, just outside the city wall, lies the burial-ground where were laid such of our British soldiers as died during the four years' occupation of Canton by the Allies. The ground is planted with feathery bamboos, which are visible from afar.

The country beyond is one vast expanse of barren hills, all

honeycombed with horse-shoe-shaped tombs, and with the myriad nameless graves of the poor of countless generations. But ere these are laid to rest in the grave, they have to wait awhile at an intermediate resting-place known as "The City of the Dead," near to which we passed this morning,—a very extraordinary place it is. I came to see it at leisure one day last week.

We passed by a small lake shaded by dark trees, wherein a multitude of white storks roost and build. They are deemed sacred birds, and are in a manner guardians of the Silent City, which lies within a walled enclosure. At the entrance is a small temple, with gilded images, and here lives a Buddhist priest who has charge of the place, and lives alone with this ghostly community. The city is laid out like a miniature city of the living, in streets of small houses built of stone. They are of varying sizes, some only just large enough to contain one ponderous coffin, with the invariable altar and some other adjuncts. Others contain the unburied dead of a whole clan, numbering perhaps eight or ten persons, for whom the lucky day of burial has not yet been announced by the wily geomancers, who prolong its arrival indefinitely so long as there is a chance of extracting coin from the survivors.

There are altogether nearly two hundred houses in this ghostly city, without counting what I may describe as suburbs of wretched outhouses, where poor neglected coffins are placed. These tell of relatives who, weary of paying house-rent for years at the bidding of the priests, have at last stopped payment, so the coffins have been removed to these sheds, here to await permission from the authorities for burial at some spot on the surrounding hills.

But the well-cared-for dead in the actual city are surrounded by cardboard models of all manner of comforts, including life-sized servants, fans, pipes, umbrellas, and in many cases a light is kept ever burning above the altar. Some also are guarded by a living white cock, whose crowing is supposed to be specially attractive to the soul which has to remain with the body.[1]

I am told that a very curious ceremony is enacted in this Silent City about the end of July, where all mourners who have here laid their dead within a twelvemonth, and especially all widows (though their husbands may have been waiting here for years), come to spend a long and weary day in loud and bitter lamentation. They all come in plain cotton-dresses—no silks, no artificial flowers, no rouge may be worn on this day. Each family erects a temporary

[1] One of three souls, possessed by every human being. I shall have occasion in a future chapter to speak more fully on all matters relating to the dead.

altar in the temple for its own use, and thereon lays the offerings for its own dead, including letters to the spirits wrapped in crimson paper for good-luck. These are duly burnt with the other offerings, the altar-flame being the celestial post-office. As this particular service occurs at the very height of burning midsummer, these poor women have a very severe day's work!

There is one detail connected with funerals on these barren hills which is beyond measure revolting—namely, that the miserable and loathsome lepers who are driven out from the city and live apart in a village (which is, in fact, an asylum for lepers) on the edge of this great wilderness of graves, have a prescriptive right to lie in wait for funerals and extort large alms from the mourners. The latter dare not refuse, even when the demands are extortionate, as it is believed that in that case their relative would be persecuted by lepers in the spirit-world!

These luckless Ishmaelites, knowing that every man's hand is against them, combine against the rest of the world, simply to extort the wherewithal to obtain the necessaries of life. So they calculate from the general pomp of a funeral, how large a sum they may venture to demand. Should their claim be deemed overmuch, they sometimes leap into the grave, and refuse to allow the coffin to be lowered till at least a promise of payment has been made. Such a promise is of course inviolable, but should any hitch occur, the lepers unscrupulously dig up the coffin and hold it as a hostage till payment is received. (This is doubly curious, inasmuch as the presence of a corpse in a house renders it creditor-proof! Thus dutiful children sometimes retain their father's coffin in their dwelling-house for many years. While they do so, they have the satisfaction of knowing that even if they are unable to pay rent, their landlord dares not turn them out!)

In the allowance for funeral expenses here, a certain sum is always included as the leper's fee, but occasionally, in order to avoid unseemly disputes at the grave, the funeral party agree to denude their procession of all its magnificence as they leave the city, so that the lepers may be deceived into supposing that the deceased was a poor man.

The aforesaid village-asylum provides shelter for about five hundred lepers, and the paternal Government makes an allowance for the most helpless. The others, however, are expected to earn their own living by making ropes of cocoa-nut fibre. Such of the women as are least outwardly afflicted are allowed to carry these goods for sale to a special rope-market. Considering how much

rope must be handled, both in making and in using, it certainly is strange that these should be the objects selected by Government as the special industry for the victims of a disease which is generally acknowledged to be so fearfully infectious.

The form of leprosy which is here prevalent is that known as "tubercular elephantiasis," which is identical with the disease which in medieval ages filled the leper hospitals of Britain and Europe.[1] Its victims are anything but "white as snow," for the skin becomes covered with burning red blotches, and sometimes a few hard blue spots indicate the mischief which is brewing within. Gradually the smooth skin becomes bloated and shining, the eyes are bloodshot, the features distorted, the voice becomes rough and rasping. Then comes the last awful stage, when the fell disease eats away flesh and bones, and one by one fingers and toes, nose, hands, and feet drop off, and the miserable leper literally dies piecemeal—revolting to himself and to all around him. This stage may be reached in quite early youth—and young girls are sometimes seen who have lost both hands and feet!

For this awful disease no cure is known,[2] only there is a ghastly superstition that a draught of warm human blood is beneficial. Hence some terrible murders have been committed by Chinese lepers—a matter which acquires interest from the fact that even in Scotland a kindred superstition found place. "It ought to be known," said old Michael Scott, the Fifeshire wizard, "that the blood of dogs and of infants two years old and under, when diffused through a bath of heated water, dispels the leprosy without a doubt!"

[1] We scarcely seem to realise that four hundred years ago this terrible scourge was so common in our British Isles, that upwards of six hundred hospitals for lepers were scattered over the land, from the southern coast to the far north. We have records of upwards of a hundred of these which were well endowed and tended by the knights of St Lazarus, an order of knighthood specially instituted for this service. But in addition to the great lazar-houses, it was enacted by the Parliament held at Perth in A.D. 1427, that every burgh in the kingdom of Scotland must have one of its own. In France, A.D. 1226, Louis VIII. promulgated special laws for the regulation of two thousand leper hospitals in his kingdom!—a number which subsequently increased.

Like these miserable lepers of Canton, those of Britain were in A.D. 1283 forbidden to enter "within the portes of the burgh," but it was ordered that refuges should be provided for them outside the gates. Nevertheless (like those in the wilderness of tombs) they continued to haunt the "kirk-yairdis," there in misery and nakedness to implore alms from all who came to worship. Hence, in 1528, the sub-Dean of Glasgow ordered that twelve pennies should be distributed on the anniversary of his death to the lepers who should appear in the churchyard of the Lady College to say orisons for his soul.

[2] The Hawaiians believe that some cures have been effected at their Leper Settlement on the island of Molokai. See 'Fire-Fountains of Hawaii,' by C. F. Gordon Cumming. Blackwood & Sons.

(If only these Chinese lepers would be satisfied with the blood of female babies, they would have no reason to complain of the supply, for so many poor little girls in all ranks are here put to death by their own mothers, with the full sanction of public opinion, that occasionally thoughtful men of the literary classes endeavour to stir up some feeling on the subject. One of their efforts took the form of pasting up illustrated placards, with representations of a cruel mother calling her slave to prepare a wine-bath in which to drown the baby. Then comes a picture of the mother herself in the act of drowning the child. This is followed by successive pictures of her condemnation after death, concluding with a gruesome picture of a terrible baby-headed serpent, about to devour the ruthless mother.)

In Britain, rigid laws regarding the separation of the sexes marked the care taken to prevent the hereditary transmission of leprosy. Thus from an account of the old manners of the Scotch in the fifteenth century, we learn that if a woman who was a leper should by chance be found to be with child, "*both scho and hir barne war buryit quick*" (that is to say, she and her child were buried alive), a rough-and-ready mode of stamping out disease, to have been practised by our own ancestors!

Here there is no such precaution, for though lepers in this province are banished from all contact with other folk, there is no attempt to check their intermarriage one with another, so that miserable offspring are born to this heritage of unutterable lifelong woe, which sometimes reveals itself most distressingly, even in little children; and Chinese superstition carries its curse beyond the grave, for it is believed that he who has been a leper on earth must continue such in Hades, where he wanders a loathed outcast. As the lepers of Canton are estimated at upwards of three thousand, and there is only accommodation for about five hundred in this village-asylum in the banyan grove, others are provided for in various places. A certain number are housed in neat huts erected by some benevolent soul on one of the hills near the City of the Dead.

Others betake them to the rivers, and take up their quarters in leper-boats, and so are nominally stationed at one of the leper anchorages. Nevertheless, in order to collect alms, these leper-boats start in large parties, one man in each boat, and row about as lusty beggars who will not be refused. They have so few possibilities of earning a livelihood, that we need scarcely marvel that some of their methods are horrible. One is to start in pursuit of

floating corpses, not only for the sake of reward from relatives who may be anxious to recover the body, but also for the sake of such clothes or other property as they may be able to annex.

I suppose that the geomancers must have discovered that to-day was not likely to prove lucky for funerals, for we saw neither funerals nor lepers as we crossed the vast cemetery of undulating ground marked by so many thousand horse-shoe-shaped graves, varying in size and material, and such an incalculable multitude of nameless mounds.

From the Green Isle of Shameen to the upper monastery on the White Cloud Mountains, is considered a three hours' expedition in chairs. We abandoned ours when we reached the base of the mountains, and walked up a pretty ravine overshadowed by graceful bamboos, and presently came to a picturesque double-roofed temple, to which is attached a Buddhist monastery. Still ascending the ravine, we came to a second monastery. Of these there are thirteen, scattered over the sides of these hills, each most happily placed, proving their founders to have had a good eye for a site. The monks are very friendly to foreigners, and at certain monasteries rooms are placed at the disposal of such as come here from Canton for the day. Even one day in such clear exhilarating air is a delightful change, and the bright sunshine and cloudless blue sky are a joy in themselves.

We walked almost to the summit of the ridge, part of the ascent being by very steep stone steps. The view looking back over the plain is vast and very fine. There is the near view of the wonderful unlimited burial-ground—some hills literally crowded with horse-shoe graves, while others, doubtless pronounced unlucky sites, are wellnigh deserted. Beyond these lies the great walled city, with its tall pagodas, and then the winding river with all its tributary creeks and canals.

When we came down from our high level, we found an excellent picnic-luncheon awaiting us in a neat guest-room at one of the monasteries, after which we started on our return trip.

On reaching the city we halted at the Tain-gak-miu, a very fine triple temple, shrine within shrine. It is adorned with much fine carving and gilding, and well-sculptured idols, and many images of divers sorts, including a stately goddess whose shrine is literally buried in the heaps of little wee shoes presented by ladies as votive offerings. The great hanging lamps were being lighted, and a few devout worshippers were burning "joss-paper" at a handsome brazier. Altogether the whole scene was very striking.

Thence we came out into the dark crowded streets, and noted how every house had lighted two little red tapers and some incense-sticks before a little niche at the side of the door containing a tablet to the honour of the Earth God. Many were burning paper money as an offering to hungry spirits, and firing red crackers to frighten away all devils. Then we passed through brilliantly illuminated streets of shops, more crowded than ever by reason of many street stalls, preparing for to-morrow's great night fair—the Chinese New-Year's eve.

CHAPTER IV.

CHINESE NEW YEAR.

Old Style—Preparations for New Year—The midnight fair—My china lions—Offerings and worship at the New Year—Toy-market for children—Feast of lanterns—The ladies' festival.

NEW-YEAR'S DAY, *Jan.* 22*d.*

THE great festival is now fairly ushered in, and certainly there has been noise enough to secure a very lucky year, if noise will do it!

It does seem so strange to write New-Year's day against the 22d January, though the fact of so many old folk and old customs in Scotland, still dating from "Old Style," and keeping their New-Year festival on January 12th, might make it seem less odd to me than to some people. Here the Chinese reckon a year by twelve lunar months, inserting an extra month into every fourth year, to square the calendar. Consequently New-Year's day is a very movable feast, varying from this 22d January to February 20th. The date is regulated by that of the new moon nearest to the day when the sun has reached the 15° of Aquarius.

The festival is kept up for about a fortnight, during which there is much play and little work. In fact, all who can afford it devote a whole month to feasting and recreation and theatrical exhibitions. Public and private business are alike set aside as far as possible, and relaxation from all cares is the one thing aimed at.

The Seal of Office belonging to every mandarin is formally sealed up on the 20th day of the twelfth month, and so remains for one month, a few blank sheets having been stamped ready for use in

case of any sudden emergency, and marked with four characters in red ink, to prove that they actually were stamped before the festive day, when the seal was laid by—a day which is always observed with much feasting and rejoicing. In short, it is the beginning of the holidays.

Every house and temple in the city has undergone a regular house-cleaning; floors have been scoured, walls washed, and it is considered an especially lucky omen to sweep the house with a broom made of bamboo shoots. In rich men's houses carpets are laid down; the beautiful blackwood furniture is covered with crimson embroidered cloth; gorgeous gold and artificial flower ornaments, banners, scrolls, charmed words and characters, are hung up in the reception-rooms, which are also decorated with fragrant plants.

Last night all people, of whatsoever social degree, presented offerings and gave thanks at their domestic and ancestral altars for care vouchsafed during the year; joss-sticks were burnt, lamps and candles were kept burning brightly, and offerings laid before the shrines; gongs were beaten, and an incessant discharge of fire-crackers kept up. These consist of red tubes containing gunpowder, resembling miniature cartridges, and fastened together in rows, which, being thrown on the ground, go off with a sharp report; or if one is fired, all the others go off in rapid succession, making much noise but little show. Being let off at intervals before every door to frighten away bad spirits, they produce an almost incessant and deafening noise, and fill the air with smoke and smell of gunpowder. If only the evil spirits have ears, they must surely suffer as much as we, the unsympathetic white "barbarians," and flee anywhere to get beyond its reach!

Yesterday all who could afford it had a great family banquet, prolonged for many hours (the multitude of small dishes and wearisome succession of courses forming the great feature at a Chinese feast). Just before midnight fresh offerings are laid before the ancestral tablets, bonfires are lighted, presents made to servants and children, and those who possess new clothes put them on. All endeavour, at least, to have clean clothes for this occasion.

To foreigners the interest of the New-Year festival begins and ends on its eve, when the streets are thronged with people all buying and selling, every one hoping to profit by his neighbour's necessities to drive hard bargains even in the purchase of flowers for the domestic altar! The street known as Curio Street is lined from end to end with a double row of street stalls, where much trash, and occasionally some good things, are offered for sale.

Having spent the greater part of the day in wandering about the city, to see as much as possible of the Celestial manners and customs, we returned at night to see the great fair. Of course there was a dense crowd, but by distributing our party in couples, we got through it very well. I had the good fortune to be pioneered by a son of Dr Chalmers, whose perfect knowledge of the language proved of considerable advantage, as we wandered through the strange lantern-lighted streets, where the gorgeous sign-posts are made more attractive by decorations of scarlet cloth and gold flowers. We wandered about for a couple of hours, in and out of the temples and gardens and strange little shops, buying all manner of odd treasures, which we stored in a basket which we had been recommended to bring for this purpose, as of course on such a night the purchaser must himself carry away his goods.

The really attractive objects, however, proved fewer than I had expected; and as the evening wore on, I expressed some regret that I had not secured two delightfully odd white china lions, which we had noted at a distant stall. My companion most nobly volunteered to go back and get them, but as I did not wish to face the crowd again, he asked a Chinaman to let me wait a few minutes in his shop, but this he positively refused from the fear of attracting a crowd, under cover of which his shop might be robbed. He then asked several others if they would at least keep our somewhat weighty basket of odd purchases, while we both returned. Even this was refused, on the ground of not venturing to risk robbery. So we had to crush on for fully half a mile, till we neared the foreign settlement, and reached a shop with which Europeans habitually deal.

There I was allowed to wait, but we had now left the coveted lions so far behind that it was a good half-hour ere Mr Chalmers rejoined me, having fortunately found them still "to the fore." Meanwhile I had at least gained a new experience, as I sat there alone, with a crowd of Chinese shop-keepers who were sitting there waiting for midnight, and evidently having an angry discussion over the settlement of their New-Year's eve accounts.

We got home just before midnight, but even from the quiet of the Shameen we could hear the roar of fire-crackers from the river and the city, and it continued for some hours. Indeed there can be little time for rest, for long before dawn worship must be offered to the Gods of Earth and Heaven, and sacrifices prepared, which are laid on a temporary altar in an outer room. These consist generally of five or ten small cups of tea, the same of wine,

also of divers vegetables, a bowl of rice with ten pairs of chop-sticks, an almanack of the New Year tied with red string for luck, two or more ornamental red candles, and a pile of loose-skinned mandarin oranges, which, from their name (*kek*, meaning also "auspicious"), are considered a lucky emblem, and, as such, are given to all visitors.

After a salvo of noisy crackers to frighten evil spirits, the head of the household adores Heaven and Earth in the name of the assembled family, giving thanks for past protection, and craving blessings for the coming year. This act of adoration is followed by another *feu de joie* and the burning of much joss-paper and mock paper-money.

Worship must next be rendered to the Domestic Gods. Another set of offerings must be prepared,—small cups of tea and wine, tiny bowls of rice and vegetables, lighted candles and incense, burning of mock money. No animal food is offered on this day, and many families abstain from eating it, from reverence to the Spirits of Heaven and Earth.

The Deceased Ancestors of the family are then worshipped, and a third set of offerings, similar to those already given to the gods, must be laid before the ancestral tablets, which are generally kept in an inner room.

Much feasting ensues, and then a round of full-dressed visits must be paid; richly-dressed mandarins and ladies are carried along in their closely-shut sedan-chairs, and friends on meeting stand still and bow repeatedly, while affectionately shaking their *own* clenched fists. Sometimes sugar-canes are fastened on to a lady's chair as a symbol of goodwill to the friend she visits. As the gift is purely ceremonial, the sugar-cane is rarely detached, so it does for all her friends, and combines economy with courtesy! The visits are most ceremonious, involving reverential homage to all elders and superiors, from juniors and inferiors.

Relatives of a family coming to call are led to the domestic altar, where they worship the ancestral tablets. Then sweetmeats and cakes are handed round, and tea, with either an olive or an almond in each cup, for luck. Copper cash are strung on red twine to give away on New-Year's morning, a red silk thread is plaited in the children's hair, and small packets of cash or of melon seeds are tied up in red paper to give to friends. Presents of eatables are sent to friends; baskets of the lucky loose-skinned orange, and cakes of cocoa-nut, small seeds, and sugar fried in oil, made up into brown balls. These were given to us at the house

of a wealthy noble, whose very kindly wife and daughters, seeing that we thought them nice, not only insisted on filling our mouths with very large pieces, but sent a large basketful home with us. We saw innumerable roast-pigs and fowls being carried along the streets, either as gifts to the living, or offerings to the dead or to the gods.

About noon we went for a walk through the streets, usually so busy, but they seemed as if under a spell, all asleep. After the noise and hubbub of last night, this stillness was the more remarkable: it almost seemed as if my memories of the bewildering throngs in the midnight fair had all been a strange dream! Almost every shop was shut, for it is considered an unlucky omen to buy or sell on the New Year, and poor indeed must be the man who will do so. Certainly we did see some very respectable clothes-shops open, and others selling sweetmeats and other food; still these are very exceptional, and most shops remain closed for several days. Indeed the longer they can afford to do so the more highly are they esteemed by their neighbours, for this is a sure proof of prosperity.

The deserted streets are all red with the remains of the paper fire-crackers let off last night; and as to certain temples we visited, their floors are literally strewn ankle-deep with the relics of the midnight battle fought with the devils! We went in and out of various fine buildings to see their decorations. One large establishment is a sort of dispensary for giving medical advice gratis to the poor—such funny medical advice! Its rooms are separated by very handsome open-work wood-carving. A little farther we came to a merchant's guild, and found its grand hall so decorated as to resemble a temple—with images and a temporary altar covered with imitation fruit, and little parcels of cash tied up in red paper as luck-pennies. The altar was decorated with huge bunches of gold flowers, and beside it stood a splendid state umbrella of crimson satin embroidered in gold. In short, everything suggested festivity; but as to the human beings, they were apparently all asleep after the fatigues of night and morning.

This afternoon we strolled as far as the Bund, but even the boating population seemed to be all sleeping, and no wonder!

Jan. 24th.

This is my last day in this most quaintly fascinating city. I have been for a farewell look at some of its most remarkable temples, and most characteristic streets. Especially we have visited

the great sight of the day—namely, the New-Year toy-market for children, gay with images floating on silver clouds, paper and gold flowers, and all manner of cheap playthings—a perfect paradise for the little ones, who mustered strong in their gayest clothes. The tiny ones look so funny with their odd little embryo plaits, sticking out like small horns on either side of the head.

There are also markets in the open street for the sale of paper lanterns of every conceivable form; flowers and fruits, butterflies and dragon-flies, birds, fishes, and animals, dragons, pigs, horses, crabs, monstrous human heads, &c. One very pretty form is that of five butterflies so arranged as to form a square lamp. In some, quaint processions of figures are made to move round and round by the action of heated air.

This feast of lanterns continues for a fortnight. Parents who have been blessed with offspring in the past year, buy lamps and present them as thank-offerings at the neighbouring temples. Those who crave additions to their family also buy lanterns, to which they attach their names. They present them to one of the temples, where they are lighted from the sacred fire of the altar-lamps and suspended for some days, after which they are sent back to the house of the suppliant, to be suspended before his domestic shrine, above which are placed small waxen images of the gods of rank, happiness, and long life.

There are at this time all manner of processions in the streets at night, when men and women are dressed to represent characters in ancient Chinese stories; sometimes a monstrous dragon is represented, but he more resembles a centipede, the legs of the men who move him being plainly visible! These, with torch- and lantern-bearers to swell the show, are among the amusements of the evening, which must really be exceedingly attractive, as the narrow streets are all illuminated with gay lamps suspended from beams which go right across from roof to roof, and are decorated with draperies of bright-coloured stuffs, hung in festoons.

On some of these festivals there are very remarkable fireworks, in which dragons are shown vomiting flames, rockets burst to descend in a shower of pagodas, amid wondrous coruscations of gold and silver fire—in short, the scenic effects are said to be as varied as they are effective.

But I might linger here for months without exhausting the interests of this strange city, and now I must devote a few days to the old Portuguese settlement of Macao.[1]

[1] Macao, with its old-world religious life, was to me most fascinating. Like

CHAPTER V.

FROM HONG-KONG TO AMOY.

Bishop Burdon—Pioneer work in Hang-Chow and Peking—Meeting in far countries—Hong-Kong races—Grand stands and mortuary chapels—Fire-alarm—Swatow and Kak Chio—Amoy and Ku-lang-su—Boulder-covered hills—The Citadel—On the walls—Artificial flowers—Bamboo oysters—Oyster-shell windows—The Thousand-headed Goddess—Green beetles.

St Paul's College, Hong-Kong,
Sunday, 9th Feb.

I HAVE been back in Hong-Kong for ten days, and am more and more impressed with its beauty and general fascination. I can scarcely imagine the possibility of finding pleasanter winter-quarters, or a more charming general society.

From Macao I returned to the same kind friends from whose delightful home I had started, and a week slipped quickly by, the days devoted to sketching expeditions, alone or with congenial companions, and the evenings bringing their various phases of pleasant social life, all of which gain an additional charm from the beauty of the moonlight or starlight, as seen from our chairs (mine, at any rate, being always uncovered).

Now I am on a visit to the Bishop and Mrs Burdon, a little lower down the same glen,—another pleasant home, and a glimpse of another phase of the working life of the city. And such glimpses have the charm of being by no means confined to any one section of Christians, for the hospitality of this house is large-hearted, and is extended to the workers of other denominations. At the present moment one of the bishop's guests is Dr Graves of the Baptist Medical Mission at Canton, who came thence in order to baptise eight converts—adult Chinamen—a ceremony which took place at 5 A.M. this morning, by immersion in the sea.

There are few men in China who have been engaged in mission-work longer than Bishop Burdon, and probably none whose field of work has been so varied. He joined the Shanghai Mission in 1853, and six years later he started as a pioneer to see whether

some old English cathedral towns, it is suggestive of a still back-water on life's rushing river. But space is limited—China is a vast subject, and Macao is so essentially un-Chinese, that I have decided to omit the letters referring to it.



CITY OF VICTORIA, HONG-KONG.
FROM THE NORTH FORT.

there was any possibility of commencing a mission at Hang-Chow. For two months he lived in a boat outside the city, making daily visits within the wall to feel his way. Then Mr Nevius of the American Presbyterian Mission joined him, and both succeeded in renting small rooms at a Buddhist monastery on one of the hills within the city.

Just then, the news of the repulse of the British fleet off the Taku Forts led to such excitement that it became necessary for the pioneers to retire, and seven years elapsed ere it became possible for Mr Burdon to return thither. In 1861 he again started as a pioneer, and established himself in the great city of Shaou-hing, a hundred miles to the west of Ningpo, assisted only by one of the Ningpo catechists, but with no foreign companionship save an occasional visit from Mr Fleming, a brother missionary. From this advance-post he was, at the end of nine months, fairly driven back by the advance of the Tai-ping insurgents, and, rejoining the mission at Ningpo, shared with his brethren there in all the anxieties of that terrible time.

In the early spring of the following year (1862) he accompanied Bishop Smith to Peking to judge whether it would be possible for the Church Mission Society to commence work in the northern capital, where Dr Lockhart of the London Mission had been the first to enter and commence medical-mission work. From that beginning dates the commencement of the work of these two Societies in Peking.[1]

From the far north, Mr Burdon was called to be the Bishop of Southern China, and now his anxiety is to commence a medical mission at Pakhoi, the south-westernmost port opened to foreign commerce. He says that at present, in this great province of Kwang-tung, which is double the size of England, and has a population of nineteen millions, there are only two ordained missionaries of the Episcopal Church—one at Canton and the other at Hong-Kong—and that the western half of this province has not a

[1] The Church Mission Society continued to work in Peking till 1880, when the appointment of Bishop Scott of the S.P.G. to the Bishopric of North China, and his residence at Che-foo, suggested the wisdom of resigning that field to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.

China south of lat. 28° is under the episcopal jurisdiction of the Bishop of Victoria, Hong-Kong. The first Bishop was Dr G. Smith; the second, Dr Alford; the third, Dr Burdon.

In 1872, Dr Russell was consecrated first Bishop of the Empire to the north of lat. 28°; but after his death in 1880, this huge northern diocese was divided into North China and Mid China—Dr G. E. Moule succeeding Bishop Russell at Ningpo, and Bishop Scott being appointed to the northern diocese.

single Protestant missionary, although Canton, the capital of the province, has been commercially connected with England longer than any part of China.

Saturday, 15*th*.

The bishop sails to-night for Foo-Chow, accompanied by Mr Barry, a clerical friend from Calcutta. Mrs Burdon had at first intended to go with them, and had kindly invited me to join the party, saying that the boat expedition up the Min river is one of the loveliest things in all China. But as she was not prepared for such a sudden start, it is now decided that she and I are to follow a few days later.

I am glad of the delay, as Mrs Coxon, a friend of olden days, wishes me to stay with her for the races next week, which are *the* great event of the Hong-Kong year, so that it really would be a pity to miss seeing them. They last three days, and the race-horses are all Chinese ponies, ridden by gentlemen.

Wednesday, 19*th Feb.*

Hong-Kong certainly has good reason to appreciate its own race-course, for a prettier scene could not possibly be imagined. This is the evening of the third day. Mrs Coxon being one of the very few people here who cares for the exertion of driving a pony instead of being carried by men, drove me out cheerily early each morning in her little pony-carriage, which, I think, was the only wheeled vehicle in that vast assemblage. Every one else went in chairs, borne by two, three, or four men, as the case might be (Chinese law does not allow a Chinaman to have more than two bearers, unless he holds certain official rank, but foreigners generally think it necessary to have their chair with full complement of bearers, if they have occasion to go a hundred yards!)

Each morning the whole two miles to the race-course was one densely-packed crowd of human beings, one-half of the road being absorbed by a double row of chairs and Chinese bearers, and the other half crowded with Chinamen, soldiers, sailors, native police, &c., all pouring along intent on this grand ploy—such a quaint-looking throng, yet all so perfectly orderly, they might be going to church or coming from it: and yet these Chinamen, with their impassive faces, are the most inveterate gamblers, and many a heavy stake has been lost and won in these three days. That two-mile-long procession of chairs in double file was a sight in itself. The road is a very pretty one; even the streets being

partly overshadowed by large trees, and then the way lies along the bright blue sea. Indeed blue is the predominant colour everywhere, for by far the greater part of the crowd are dressed in blue, indigo-dye being so cheap, and large blue cotton umbrellas find great favour with the Chinamen of this foreign colony.

The race-course itself is admirably situated, being a dead level embosomed in wooded hills, with a broad stream flowing to the blue sea, and the distant hills of the mainland seen through a gap. On either side of the Grand Stand are built a series of large, comfortable, thatched stands, which are the permanent property of the governor, the stewards of the races, and the different great mercantile houses, combining a luxurious dining-room on the ground-floor with a comfortable open drawing-room up-stairs, furnished with any number of arm-chairs. The finest stand of all, with flat-terraced roof, is the property of the Parsees. . The programme is, that each morning "society" meets in the Grand Stand, and there remains till the pause allowed for luncheon, when all disperse to the various great luncheon-parties in the private stands, and then spend the afternoon in the drawing-rooms aforesaid, where there is an abundant supply of coffee and ices.

I followed out this pleasant programme for two days, and was vastly amused, but this morning I determined to devote the day to sketching the scene, so I resolutely forsook the many kind friends, and went off by myself to a hill in the "Happy Valley," the peaceful cemetery for all nations and sects, whence I could overlook the whole scene; and truly it was a pretty sight, with the amazing crowd of Europeans and Chinamen seeming no bigger than ants—blue ants—and such a swarm of them!

From this high post I saw the races to perfection, and especially enjoyed the excellent music of the 74th band and of their seven pipers, headed by Mackinnon, a Speyside man. The music gained vastly as it floated up to me, every note clear, instead of the ear being distracted by all the jarring sounds of the race-course. (Apart from these, what a strange and aggravating phase of "entertainment" it is that so continually provides excellent music, and yet deems it necessary to add thereto the strain of conversation!) So this morning I had full enjoyment of "The Pibroch o' Donald Dhu," "Tullochgorum," and ever so many more beloved old melodies, which were echoed by the hills around, and floated away through fir-woods which might have clothed a Scotch hillside. I never heard anything sound better than a bugle piece by Mackinnon's son, its notes just mellowed by distance.

But, truly, looking down from this point, it is a strange combination to see the semicircle of cemeteries and mortuary chapels, just enfolding the race-course, and, as it were, repeating the semicircle formed by the Grand Stands!

Two days ago I chanced to wander into this silent God's Acre, just in time to witness a most lonely funeral. It was that of a European who had died unknown at the hospital. Four Chinese coolies carried his coffin, and the only other persons present were the parson and the sexton, neither of whom had known the poor fellow in life. It was the funeral of "somebody's darling," but not one mourner was near.

To-morrow night there is to be the usual great race ball, but ere then I expect to be far away at sea, as I embark for Foo-Chow early in the morning.

ON BOARD THE S.S. "NAMOA,"
Feb. 20th.

At 2 P.M. this morning we were aroused by the wild clanging of the fire-alarm—a sound which I have happily not heard since the first night of my arrival, when it impressed itself so awfully on our senses. Strange that my first and last night in Hong-Kong should be marked by such haunting memories! The house stands so high that it commands a wide view of the town, and looking out, we saw the flames rising from a point near the naval yard. Fortunately it did not turn out to be very serious, but Mr Coxon had to start instantly to join the fire-brigade (of which I think he is captain). Curiously enough he was introduced to me, sitting on his fire-engine, the morning of that awful Christmas night, and this morning he came straight from his engine to the steamer to say good-bye!

Various other friends also came to speed their parting guest, for in the East the world is early astir, and wondrously warm-hearted. So my last memories of Hong-Kong were as pleasant as all the rest, and it was with true regret that I looked my last on that beautiful scene, bathed in soft morning light.

ON BOARD THE "NAMOA,"
Feb. 21st.

We reached Swatow early this morning. It is a large trading town on a dull mud-flat—truly a most uninteresting spot, but one of great commercial importance by reason of the excellence of its harbour, on which account it is the port for the eastern half of the province of Kwang-tung. It also derives much importance from

its great fishing interests. Both sea and river yield vast harvests to the fishermen, and the flat mud shores are all alive with cockles, oysters, and all manner of shell-fish.

This being one of the treaty ports, a special district is assigned to foreigners as a foreign settlement, and this happily is on a high rocky island, lying at some little distance from the muddy peninsula on which stands the native city. The general outline of Kak Chio, as the isle is called, rather reminds me of the mountains at Aden: the coast is bleak and sun-scorched, studded with huge madder-coloured boulders and rock-masses; and I can well believe how pitilessly the sun blazes on these parched yellow hills during the long summer months.

Just now, however, the island is comparatively green: the pleasant homes of the European residents each have their garden, and there are clumps of feathery bamboo in every ravine, and patches of fir-wood scattered all over the hills, as if to contrast with the dark-red borders; and here and there a patch of vivid green shows where diligent husbandmen have laid out a whole series of terraced rice-fields.

Now we are approaching the Fuh-kien province, fully expecting to find ourselves at Amoy at daybreak.

Feb. 23d.

Which expectations were realised, and we straightway went ashore, to make the most of one long day—for the very first glimpse of the place filled me with regret that I had not known beforehand how much of beauty and of interest are here to be seen. It is a delightfully picturesque city, lying in very irregular streets all along the boulder-strewn shores of the high rocky island, with considerable intermixture of foliage, and a harbour alive with quaint junks.

Here, as at Swatow, the foreign residences are all on an island, just separated from the city by a narrow strait, which men must cross whenever their business calls them to the city. I think this island of Ku-lang-su is as attractive as the city itself. Its large luxurious foreign houses are scattered in the most tasteful manner among the great rocks and foliage.

In the most beautifully situated of all, breakfast awaited us, and, thanks to the very thoughtful arrangements of two sets of friends, I was enabled to see a very great deal with the greatest possible economy of time. Having rapidly secured a general sketch of the town from the foreign settlement, our friends took me across to visit a Buddhist monastery, which is perched among the great madder-coloured boulders which have fallen so as to make covered caves.

On landing I found a chair and bearers all ready to carry me up the steep paths. We passed by some picturesque old junks which lay stranded on the shore, some interesting graves and very fine old trees, and quaint shrines and temples, some of which are built in the boulder-caves. In these also are stone seats and tables all ready for Chinamen's picnics. In one huge projecting rock there is a strange cleft known as the Tiger's Mouth. Round it is constructed a stone gallery, which gives the appearance of teeth. In this strange resting-place we sat and watched a funeral procession winding up the steep path below—the mourners dressed, some in white and some in sackcloth. As the procession approached the hill it looked very gay, with a rich crimson pall covering the coffin, and a small square pall covering the tablet of the dead. But at the foot of the hill the party halted, and, removing these gay superfluities,[1] bore only the solid wooden coffin up the steep path to some lucky spot on the hill.

Nowhere have I ever seen such innumerable and gigantic boulders as are here strewn broadcast all over the hills. As far as the eye can reach, these ranges of parched barren dust are all alike studded with these huge dark rocks, which seem as if they could only have dropped from the clouds. Here and there, however, they crop up as the backbone of the hills, and the town itself is divided by a rocky ridge crested with fortifications and cannon, which command the estuary, where lie so many trading vessels; for Amoy, having long been one of the open ports, is the centre of a large foreign trade, and is, moreover, the principal point of communication with the island of Formosa.

It is a vast busy crowded city, with a population reckoned at a hundred thousand, an estimate which is capable of large increase if it be made to include the surrounding country, for it seems that Amoy is not only a city but an island, about ten miles in diameter, whereon about a hundred villages and townlets contrive to exist. Hence it has been a great centre for mission work, as would appear from the fact that thirty years ago there were only twenty Christian converts connected with the Amoy missions, whereas now there are upwards of three thousand communicants in connection with three of the missions, and doubtless the other Churches have adherents in proportion.[2]

We wandered for some time among the boulder-caves and

[1] Probably to deceive importunate beggars: see page 68.

[2] These three are the London Mission, 883; the English Presbyterian, 685; American Methodist-Episcopal, 1669.

shrines, and ruinous but picturesque graves, here and there finding some overshadowed by wide-spreading trees, or guarded by stately aloes, which seem to flourish in this soil of decomposing granite.

Then we turned to the old city and walked for some distance on its walls, whence we had an excellent view looking down into the town. The walls are much smaller than those of Canton. I saw no tall pagodas, nor great square keeps, such as those which in Canton and Macao look so important, though they are only pawn-shops!

We went to the citadel, and there saw a considerable body of Chinese soldiers, delightfully quaint to look upon, and suggestive of pantomimes and burlesques, but not very alarming in war, I should imagine. Some were armed with spears, some with bows and arrows, many apparently carried only a little ornamental banner on a tall flagstaff. The most dangerous-looking warriors were armed with rifles of preternatural length, very much taller than themselves, while others had old flintlock guns, suggestive of medieval Europe.

Then we wandered through endless crowded dirty streets and markets, which are an ever-new source of bewilderment and delight to me. One of the special industries of Amoy is the manufacture of artificial flowers for the adornment of ladies' heads—not realistic flowers such as find favour with us, but very pretty fanciful objects in silk crape. Here, too, artificial flowers are made specially as offerings to the Imperial dead. Strange to say, the simple custom of scattering flowers on graves is here a royal monopoly. Commoners may decorate the tombs of their dead with ornaments of white and red paper, but none, except they be of the blood-royal, dare to use flowers, and artificial flowers are preferred to natural ones.

Passing through the busy streets, I observed that all the food-shops were diligently preparing red cakes, which we were told were "spring cakes," and huge white wafer-cakes, to be offered to the sun. These are made by dabbing a mass of paste on to a hot iron plate, to which enough adheres to form one thin scone, which can be lifted in about four seconds.

My attention was specially called to the stalls of the fishmongers, who not only have river and sea fish, salt and fresh, in great abundance, but an excellent store of bamboo oysters; and if you wonder what they are, perhaps I may as well explain that artificial oyster-culture is largely practised on this coast, and a bamboo oyster-field is prepared far more carefully than a Kentish hop-garden.

Holes are bored in old oyster-shells, and these are stuck into and on to pieces of split bamboo, about two feet in length, which are then planted quite close together, on mud-flats between high and low water mark, but subject to strong tidal currents. This is supposed to bring the oyster spat, which adheres to the old shells, and shortly develops into tiny oysters. Then the bamboos are transplanted, and set some inches apart, and within six months of the first planting they are found to be covered with well-grown oysters, which are then collected for the market. Cockles are likewise in great request, and I am told that they are also artificially cultivated on the muddy flats at the mouths of certain rivers.

The oyster-shells are turned to very good account, being scraped down till they are as thin as average glass, when they are neatly fitted together so as to form ornamental windows, such as we see in the inner courts of wealthy homes.[1]

Of course we went into various temples, in one of which I was struck by an image of Kwan-yin, the thousand-armed Goddess of Mercy, in which this attribute is depicted by the fact that the golden halo within which she stands is formed of a thousand golden hands.

It was really tantalising not to be able to explore farther, but as time and steamers wait for no man, I had to console myself with carrying off a prize of exquisite large green beetles as a memento of so interesting a city.

Note.—On the 21st November 1887, on a calm sunny afternoon, the peaceful residents on Ku-lang-su were suddenly startled by a deafening roar, the isle rocked as if shaken by an earthquake, and almost every house was more or less damaged; some fell in ruins, and few escaped shattered doors and windows. This was the first intimation which residents in the foreign concession received of the fact that since the scare consequent on the bombardment of Foo-Chow by the French, the Chinese had established a powder-maga-

[1] We, who have been all our lives accustomed to the luxury of large glass windows, wonder that the inventive Chinaman should so long have been content with the dim light that reaches him through carved wooden lattice-work, or, at best, through tiny panes of opaque oyster-shells. Yet scarcely three centuries have elapsed since glass windows were in Britain deemed so precious as to be reserved for churches, and rarely found a place even in the homes of the wealthy. When they did so, they were carefully removed whenever the family was absent, and were laid up in store till their return! But ordinary dwelling-houses were provided with windows of lattice-work, either made of wicker or of fine rifts of oak set check-wise; while delicate persons, who feared draughts, indulged in the luxury of panels of horn set in wooden frames.

zine on the opposite shore, in the heart of a populous suburb of Amoy, and had there stored 400 tons of gunpowder and a vast accumulation of ammunition!

The explosion was attributed to the culpable recklessness of the mandarin in charge, who was in the habit of smoking even while on duty in the magazine. On the day in question, his men were engaged in drying damp gunpowder, and it was affirmed that even then his pipe was alight. As the 400 tons of gunpowder exploded, he and his forty-eight soldiers were so effectually blown to pieces that coolies had to be employed to go about with baskets, collecting their arms, legs, and other fragments. Hundreds of the townspeople were seriously injured, either by the concussion, the falling of houses, or the bursting of shells, filled with four-pronged spikes of iron, destined for invaders: these inflicted horrible laceration.

As usual, one catastrophe leads to another, and the houses in falling scattered fire, which, fanned by a sharp breeze, spread rapidly, resulting in the destruction of fully one-fourth of the city.

CHAPTER VI.

ON THE MIN RIVER.

Amoy to Foo-Chow—Pagoda Anchorage—Isle of Nantai—Foo-Chow—Bridge of Ten Thousand Ages—Start on a cruise—Life in a house-boat—Ruined bridge at Kung-Kow—Orange-groves—On the Yuen-foo river—The monastery in the cave—Use of opera-glasses—Hot springs—Magpies—Chinaman's Sing-Song—Ladies in a Chinese country-house—The Yuen-ke river—The island joss-house—Cormorant-fishing—Fishing with otters—Cormorants in England.

UNITED STATES CONSULATE,
ON THE GREEN ISLE OF NANTAI, FOO-CHOW.

I LEFT Amoy with extreme regret that, in total ignorance of its many points of beauty and interest, I had not arranged to make it a halting-point, and thence visit the beautiful isle of Formosa, which is only six hours distant, and all plain sailing. I had not realised that the latter was so near, or the expedition so easy; and so, though I was most hospitably invited to stay some time at Amoy, my presence of mind was not equal to so sudden an altera-

tion of the route sketched out for me. I try to console myself by thinking that one really *cannot* see everything! and, indeed, the beauty of this district is most satisfying.

We had a very lovely passage through the Hatan Straits, threading our course between numerous rocky islets and great lumbering junks, which sorely try the patience of civilised ships by invariably steering just the way they should not.

Then we entered the Min river, and had a beautiful twenty-four miles' sail from the sea to the point known as "The Anchorage," passing between picturesque islands and fine crags, with a background of mountains towering to a height of about 4000 feet (the sacred Mount Kushan is 3900 feet), and to-night all were flushed with the rosy light of a lovely sunset.

After threading one last narrow channel we arrived at the celebrated Pagoda Island, above which lies a fertile valley about ten miles broad, through which the stream flows more sluggishly among sandy shallows. Therefore all vessels of large tonnage must lie at the Anchorage, about twelve miles below the city—a distance which, from accidents of wind and tide, often proves a serious inconvenience to the little colony of foreign residents who are here established, consisting chiefly of families in some way connected with the Arsenal or the Naval Training College. Certainly the pleasures of social life are dearly bought when they involve such weary hours of night travel by chair and boat, and it is not always possible to make arrangements for sleeping in Foo-Chow, or rather on Nantai, which is the island suburb on which foreigners are allowed to live.

A steam-launch had been sent to meet us at the Anchorage, so we were happily independent of capricious breezes, and a couple of hours brought us to Nantai, where the bishop was waiting to receive Mrs Burdon, and for me there was a note of kindest welcome from Mrs De Lano, wife of the American Consul, who had sent her own chair to bring me to the U.S. Consulate, where I am now most comfortably established.

Thursday, 27th Feb.

Nowhere in all the East have I found a pleasanter and more genial community than on this green isle, where English and Scotch, German and American residents combine to form such a kindly, cheery society. What with pleasant visits by day, and dinner-parties and private theatricals in the evenings, I think I must already have made acquaintance with a very large portion of the community, mercantile, diplomatic, and missionary.

I have not yet been into Foo-Chow itself, the "happy city," as there is much of purely Chinese interest to be seen on this isle, and the city lies on the mainland, on the left bank of the river. The two are connected by a wonderful bridge, rejoicing in the name of Wan-show-Keaou, "the Bridge of Ten Thousand Ages." It is about a third of a mile in length, a distance only divided by one small islet, on which are clustered picturesque houses. The bridge consists of a solid roadway fourteen feet wide of enormous slabs of grey granite, some of which are forty-five feet in length, and three feet square. They rest on a series of forty-nine ponderous piers, shaped like a wedge at either end. These also are built of huge granite blocks, which fill one with amazement as to how they could possibly have been hewn and transported here from some far-distant mountain quarry. Forty piers support the main bridge between the mainland and the islet. The other nine connect the islet with Nantai. Already this massive bridge has resisted the rushing timber-laden floods of nine hundred years, and still it stands firm as of yore—no sign of any weak point in that wonderful structure, unless I must note, as such, the growth of several picturesque self-sown trees which have been suffered to take root on the buttresses.

A high stone parapet on either side protects the crowds who are for ever crossing and recrossing this venerable bridge. As if its natural traffic were not sufficient, a number of street stalls are daily established on one side, for the sale of curious pipe-bowls, cakes, and cheap objects of various sorts. Sometimes a more ghastly object is here exhibited, namely, the head of some decapitated criminal; and, not long ago, a wretched thief, having been condemned to die of starvation as a mild sort of punishment for stealing part of a head-dress belonging to the wife of a wealthy mandarin, was here exposed in an upright cage with only his head protruding, and so nicely calculated as to height that he literally hung by his head, only his toes touching the ground. On his cage was fastened a paper recounting his crime and his sentence; and idle crowds gathered round to read it, and to watch his lingering hours of torture, slowly dying beneath the fierce blazing sun, which beat so pitilessly on his shaven head. Women and children, to whom pity or horror were apparently alike unknown, stood staring curiously at the poor wretch, till merciful death came to his relief.

The ceaseless surging tide of busy life moves as restlessly beneath the bridge as above it, for not even at Canton itself have I seen a greater multitude of boats of all shapes and sizes. Just

below the bridge lie a multitude of extraordinarily picturesque junks, alike startling in form and colour, while above the bridge the river is literally covered with thousands of sampans, and all sorts of boats, rafts, barges of every size, and with every sort of cargo, forming a fascinating foreground to lovely scenery.

All the country about here is most beautiful; but I am told that the farther one goes up the river, the more attractive it becomes, so my kind hostess has arranged a delightful ploy for me. Another good friend has placed his house-boat and crew entirely at our disposal, and we two are to start off by ourselves, to-morrow if possible, and see all we can! I consider myself singularly fortunate in my companion, for though she has lived in China for about twelve years, her interest in all things peculiar to the country is just as keen as it was at the very first, so she is full of sympathy with all my sight-seeing inquisitiveness!

She is already familiar with the scenery of all the rivers hereabouts, and foresees so many temptations for my pencil that she has armed herself with a whole library to secure her against impatience! Moreover, she knows exactly what we shall require in the way of commissariat, and her husband being absent on business, she takes her own excellent Chinese "boy" and cook, both of whom understand some English; so everything will be comfortable for our trip.

In a House-boat on the Yuen-Foo River,
March 1*st*.

We are fairly started on what promises to be a most delightful expedition for about a hundred miles up the Min river. We have rather hurried our departure, knowing that after so prolonged a spell of lovely weather there is every reason to expect a heavy rainfall; and when yesterday morning a clear yellow sunrise, which bathed the hills in the loveliest rosy light, was followed by dark threatening clouds, we began to fear that we might not get away at all. However, there is nothing like making a start, and getting resolutely under way.

Our floating home is one of those luxurious house-boats which are among the pleasantest possessions of the great mercantile houses—the Chinese equivalent of a good four-in-hand, which, if less exhilarating, is certainly a more soothing and restful mode of locomotion in a hot climate. Besides, we are now in a part of the world where carriages, horses, and roads are unknown.

These house-boats are just an improved version of the regular flat-bottomed boat of the country, but they are fitted up with a

good-sized cabin, with windows at both sides, so that you can sit under cover, or on the roof, as you may prefer. There is also a sleeping-cabin, a kitchen, servants' quarters, and cunningly devised drawers and cupboards, so that life on board may be exceedingly comfortable. I need scarcely say that the commissariat has not been neglected. Our sole escort consists of sixteen Chinamen—boatmen, chair-coolies, and house-servants. Our chairs, which are comfortable arm-chairs of bamboo-work slung on bamboo poles, are hoisted on the roof, ready for use whenever we choose to go ashore for any lengthy excursion. The bearers are strong cheery lads, all dressed in dark-blue blouses and wide trousers, with enormous hats of plaited bamboo, and most serviceable rain-coats and capes of some grass fibre dyed of a rich madder colour. Of course, they all have long black plaits reaching very nearly down to their bare feet. These are our human ponies, ready to carry us anywhere at any hour of the day or night, and to run messages between whiles, or hold a sketching umbrella, or whatever other service may be required of them. We each have two permanently, and engage others for the day if we chance to be going far.

We embarked yesterday afternoon, and dropped down the river about twelve miles to the Pagoda Anchorage, where we spent a pleasant social evening with many friends—Scotch, French, and Norwegian[1]—returning to sleep on board. That was not pleasant!

1 The kindly colony of foreign residents lived peacefully at the Anchorage and the Arsenal till the 22d August 1884, when the French under Admiral Courbet having, without any declaration of war, sailed up the Min river with a squadron of nine heavily armed vessels, suddenly proceeded to bombard the Arsenal, nominally to avenge what they declared to be a deed of treachery in the war at Bac Le.

The Chinese fleet, which consisted of eleven light gunboats and transports, was shelled, and maintained a desultory fire for about fifteen minutes, when the survivors of the crews leapt overboard, but the combat was practically finished in seven minutes. The 'Times' stated that the superior artillery of the French made the contest, after the disabling of the Chinese vessels, no fight—it was a massacre. No surrender was allowed to the disabled and sinking vessels; they were shelled for hours after the guns had been silenced. The firing was also continued upon the Arsenal, and the neighbouring buildings, forts, barracks, and even villages, for more than two hours after the shore batteries had ceased to offer any resistance. Burning gunboats and blazing fire-junks floated down the stream, as did also a frightful number of dead and wounded.

Subsequent private letters from Foo-Chow gave the native estimate of the Chinese massacred on that day at 3000, while by the destruction of the Arsenal 1800 workmen were deprived of the means of living. Small wonder that the enraged soldiers should have looted the houses and destroyed the furniture of the foreign residents at the Anchorage, and that all dwellers on Nantai should have continued for a while in fear of their lives, not knowing at what moment they might all have been the victims of what might well have seemed most just vengeance in the eyes of a populace who so rarely see a Frenchman that they could scarcely be expected to recognise differences of nationality. For though Frenchmen were employed by the Chinese Government at the Arsenal, *France actually has not a single mercantile house at Foo-Chow*, so that her interests there are *nil* as compared with those of the

We had a weary night, shaken by wind and rain. Several Chinese gunboats lay near, gaily decked with streamers and bright red banners in honour of some native festival. It does look so odd to see Chinese blue-jackets in correct nautical costume, but adorned with full-length black plaits—and yet our own sailors of the last generation had not only to wear queues, but, moreover, to keep them powdered!

March has come in, true to its boisterous reputation, very cold and very grey, but with a wind which sent us flying up the Yuen-foo branch of the river—you understand that some miles above Foo-Chow this great river Min separates into two streams, and the divided waters unite again fifteen miles lower down, thus forming the island of Nantai. Pagoda Island and the Anchorage are at the junction of the streams.

Sight-seeing and sketching being our sole objects, we halted off the village of Luichow (famous for its great orange-groves) to sketch the magnificent group of mountains known as "The Five Tigers"—the curly-roofed houses peeping from the dark foliage of the orange-groves, forming a charming foreground to the majestic crags which crest these hills, which to-day were enfolded in solemn gloom. The scenery about here is lovely: there are deep gorges and picturesque little tumbling streams, quaint temples perched on steep cliffs, horse-shoe-shaped graves, here, there, and everywhere in the prettiest situations, cultivated valleys where populous villages lie hidden amid clumps of fruit-bearing trees, such as mulberry, walnut, loquot, and peach-trees—and withal, there is an ever-varying background of mountains, rising to a height of about 3000 feet.

We called a second halt off the village of Kung-kow, to sketch some fine old trees, together with the very remarkable ruins of a great stone bridge of similar construction to that which, crossing the main river, connects the isle of Nantai with the city of Foo-

nations whose larger commercial relations she has imperilled; indeed at Hong-Kong she owns only one mercantile house, at Canton two, and at Shanghai five, whereas Germany had 62, and England had 289 till the steady decrease of Chinese trade with foreign countries reduced this number to about 220. It is worthy of note that of 23,863 ships which entered Chinese ports in 1883, upwards of 14,200 were English, 1610 German, and only 177 French.

So nothing could have been more natural than that the *literati* (a class notorious for their abhorrence of foreigners) should have stirred up the mob to an indiscriminate crusade against the whole lot of "Red-Headed Devils."

As it was, so great was the excitement of the people against all foreigners, that at the close of the year it was still dangerous for any to enter the city; and even the British Consul, whose well-known Chinese sympathies and long residence in the heart of the city have made him so familiar to the people, was compelled one night to escape thence disguised as a Chinaman, his life being in danger.

Chow ; but whereas *that* is only about a third of a mile in length, *this* must have been considerably longer—truly a marvellous undertaking, where (the building of arches having apparently been a science unknown to the original constructors) gigantic slabs of granite, some of which are forty feet in length, have been transported and laid across the piers. As a Chinaman cannot conceive the possibility of any improvement on the traditions of his ancestors, he still religiously adheres to their method of bridge-building as regards these great rivers, though there are wonderfully arched bridges across the canals.

A friend of mind had the luck to witness the mode of placing one of these monster slabs when it was necessary to repair the damage done by a great flood. It was a granite slab, 28 feet in length by about 6 in width and 3 in depth. The boat on which the huge stone had been floated down stream was raised above the water-level by the insertion below her of layers of barrels. The builders had exactly calculated the height of a certain high tide, and when the right moment came, the boat slipped between the two newly repaired piers, slid the stone into its place, and passed on in safety, *minus* its cargo !

At Kung-kow we diverged from the main river, that we might ascend the Yuen-foo for some distance, and now we are anchored for the night off a beautiful rocky glen, where among huge boulders of red rock there stands a very home-like watermill with a very large wheel. In the glen there is a pretty waterfall, and familiar ferns and brambles mingle with tall flowering-grasses, and thickets of jessamine and bright scarlet dwarf azaleas. We had just time for a run ashore at sunset, while the men were enjoying their mountains of rice and dried fish.

March 5th.

On the whole, we may certainly congratulate ourselves on the weather so far, as, instead of the incessant rain prophesied by our friends, we have only had passing showers, with occasional storm-clouds and shadows, which just enable us to judge how much grander these glens and peaks appear in gloom than when seen in cloudless sunlight. Two nights ago we anchored at the mouth of a dark gorge, where, on a high crag, stands an old pirate's fort—a very eerie nest for the bird of prey ! Each turn of the river is lovely, fringed here and there with clumps of feathery bamboo. Picturesque fir-trees stand out singly or in clusters on prominent headlands ; the quaintest of temples and pagodas are perched on

perpendicular cliffs; shapely peaks rise above the floating mists, tier above tier, in beautiful groups, and the whole is reflected in the glassy stream, whereon float quaint native boats, with their arched sliding covers, great brown sails, bamboo-ribbed, and steered by a gigantic oar astern. The crews are particularly picturesque in stormy weather, when they wear greatcoats of long grass, with capes of the same, and strong bamboo hats, so that each man is not only thatched but is a moving pillar of grass, supported by two bare legs!

Last night we reached a point where the river rushes down in such impetuous rapids that no ordinary boat, much less a house-boat, can ascend. As we were anxious to visit an interesting Buddhist monastery some miles up the stream, we were obliged to transfer ourselves from our floating home to a flat-bottomed boat specially constructed for this work, and a dozen men worked hard for three hours, rowing us up this difficult part of the stream. We halted for a while that I might sketch an exceedingly picturesque village with unusually curly roofs, then on once more through lovely scenery till we reached another pretty village, with a fine banyan-tree in the street, overshadowing the temple. Here we and our chairs were landed, and carried about three miles along narrow paths, between swampy rice-fields and other crops, all exquisitely green, while the brilliant yellow blossom of the rape shone like sunlight. (Butter being an unknown or unappreciated luxury, large crops of rape are grown to supply oil for cooking.)

Rice, by the way, is not sown broadcast, but every here and there one field is thickly sown to serve as a nursery. When this sprouts it forms a patch of most marvellously vivid green, and the young rice is then transplanted in basket-loads, and dibbled by hand into the neighbouring fields of wet mud.

On reaching the foot of the mountains, we left our chairs and walked up a richly-wooded dell with luxuriant vegetation, here and there enlivened by a patch of the beautiful dwarf scarlet azalea or the white stars of fragrant jessamine. I am told that in autumn this glen is gorgeous with crimson lilies and gloxinias, also that the single gardenia flowers here abundantly.

A steep ascent brought us to the Yuen-foo Buddhist monastery, the first glimpse of which is singularly picturesque, though it somehow suggested to me the idea of a hermit-crab looking out of its borrowed shell, with all its long sharp claws extended. For it consists of a cluster of wooden buildings, just like Swiss *châlets*, nestling into a cave on the face of a crag, and partly resting on

slender piles; and I suspect that, just as a wandering crab outgrows its shell, so here probably some saintly hermit first found a retreat, to which his sanctity may have attracted others for whom the cave proved too small, for the new-comers had to support their outermost buildings on a light scaffolding of tall poles of very irregular length, resting wherever a jutting angle of rock affords a vantage-point, and giving the whole a most singular effect.

From the summit of the crag falls a stream, which, lightly veiling this curious cave-dwelling, vanishes among feathery clumps of tall bamboo, and rushes impetuously down the beautiful glen.

The yellow-robed brethren received us most courteously, and not only gave us the invariable tea but also a taste of the Water of Life (or, at least, of Longevity), which drips from one of the many stalactites which fringe the roof of the cave, forming a sparkling pool before the rock shrine of Buddha and the Goddess of Mercy. In order to derive full benefit from this magic water, it is necessary to stand open-mouthed beneath the drip and catch the drops as they fall. For culinary purposes the monks have devised a most ingenious water-supply, by simply leading a rope from a bamboo trough at the kitchen-door to that point of the overhanging crag whence the bright streamlet leaps from its upper channel, falling in glittering spray into the gorge below.

There is nothing remarkable about the shrine, which is chiefly interesting for its situation, but the view from the monastery is magnificent. The priests were much interested in my sketching, and especially delighted with my opera-glasses, which, though small, are very powerful: they are the trusty companions of many wanderings, and have proved a never-failing means of fraternising with individuals or with crowds, in whatever country I have chanced to be. I sometimes think with wonder how many thousand eyes of many nationalities have had their first—probably their only—experience of opera-glasses in this little pair!

Nowhere have they been more appreciated than in this country, for though the Chinese have such extraordinary reverence for everything of the nature of writing or drawing that the use of pencil and paper seems at once to secure their respect, I always find that the crowd become doubly polite so soon as the precious glasses begin to circulate. Then they are pleased and astonished, and the glasses are carefully handed all round. I confess a qualm has sometimes crossed my mind when I have altogether lost sight of them for some time, but they have always been returned safely

with expressions of keen delight, and I am sure the people are all the more friendly for being trusted.

We had to retrace our steps pretty soon in order to get down the rapids by daylight. This, of course, was very much easier work than the ascent had been, and we found ourselves safe on board this cosy floating home soon after sunset.

ON THE YUEN-FOO RIVER, *March* 7.

Yesterday, as we dropped slowly down stream, I secured sketches of several lovely combinations of temples on crags, villages, graves, and bamboos, with ever-changing visions of dark mountain-ridges and lofty peaks revealing themselves dreamily from amid the floating mists.

To-day we halted at a village known as "The Hot Springs," which, as seen from the river, with a background of fine wooded hills, is extremely pretty. All along the shore a series of flights of rude stone stairs lead up the steep broken bank, where picturesque yellow or red houses, with very eccentric curly grey roofs, peep out, beneath fine old banyan-trees, with gnarled white stems, far-reaching boughs, fringed with brown filaments and great contorted roots entwined like huge serpents, and reaching far down the broken banks. But the village itself is very dull, each house being enclosed by a high wall to secure seclusion.

Mrs De Lano being tired, I went ashore with the excellent skipper "Sam" (I believe Sam is the generic name of all house-boat skippers!) in order to visit the three boiling springs which give the village its name. They are distant about a mile, rising in a small plain beside a cold river, and you can scald one side of your hand and freeze the other where these waters meet. Never before have I seen such a multitude of magpies—I actually counted a flock of forty!

A great festival is being held here in honour of the full moon, and the village is crowded with people in holiday attire. There has been a Sing-Song going on all day at the temple—*i.e.*, a play in honour of the goddess. As the Moon typifies the female principle in nature (the Sun, represented by fire, symbolising the male principle), there was a most unusual attendance of women, fully half the spectators being of the fair sex. They do not mix with the men—that would be most indecorous—but each occupies one-half of the house. Each woman carries a wooden stool to enable her to sit through the livelong day and most of the night. By

way of refreshment-stalls, men were stationed outside the temple selling "sweeties," consisting chiefly of a sort of almond hard-bake made of pea-nuts and sugar.

On the men's side, all, without exception, were dressed alike, forming one compact mass of blue. On the women's side there was some variety of colour, though not very much. Though all present were apparently poor peasants, they were neatly clothed and very clean; their glossy black hair most elaborately dressed, and decorated not only with the usual artificial flowers of silk and ornamental pins, but also with a quaint horn of silver or lead, rising upright from the back hair and curving forward to some height above the brow. Some wore pretty ornaments of real silver, some of most fascinating many-coloured enamel, but the majority had decorations of exquisite blue or green kingfishers' feathers daintily set in silver, or on some metal representing gold.

There seems to be no end to the varieties of feminine hair-dressing in China, and each district has its own peculiar style. That of Foo-Chow is wholly unlike that of Canton, and this again is dissimilar to either. As it is not considered correct for a woman to wear any sort of head-covering, there is every opportunity for noting these distinct fashions.

The frightfully discordant sounds of Chinese music, of course, attracted me towards the temple, and Sam decided that I must certainly see the Chinamen's Sing-Song; but he begged that I would take my hat off, as in such a rural district, where foreign eccentricities were not understood, the ladies present would be sure to make uncivil remarks! Of course I meekly complied, and for some time watched a very amusing scene. It is a large troupe, consisting exclusively of men and boys, the latter acting the feminine characters to perfection, with the aid of paint and masks and beautiful dresses. We saw kings and courtiers, cutting off of heads, and a battle scene, with most realistic fighting and flashing of gunpowder. (Do you know that the Chinese are supposed to have discovered gunpowder long before it was known in Europe?)

I could not stand the crowd and the noise for very long, so returned on board; and now the servants and most of the boatmen are having an evening ashore, and from the roar of voices and hideous discords of all sorts, we suppose that they are holding high revels in honour of the Queen of Heaven. We think we do her more honour, and certainly have more enjoyment of her calm beauty, sitting peacefully on deck, and drinking in the loveliness of the still night.

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March 8th.

Judging from our national impressions of "Jack ashore," we were half afraid that the crew would have returned somewhat the worse for their evening revel, but this happily was not the case, and there was no delay in our start this morning. We got under way at 5 A.M. in the lovely dawn, while light mists floated about the hills. We were anxious to reach the village of Yuen-kee, on the island of Nantai, in order to send the coolies three miles across the island to fetch our letters, and rejoin us to-morrow with a fresh stock of provisions, ere we proceed up the main stream of the Min river.

Our boatmen profited by the halt to get well shaved and scraped (*i.e.*, the front half of their heads), and devoted the afternoon to combing and plaiting the splendid long black back-hair which forms what we vulgarly term their pig-tail, but which certainly more resembles a well-developed cow's tail!

I went ashore with one man as escort, and wandered over fir-clad hills, all dotted over with thousands of horse-shoe-shaped graves cut into the hill and built of stone: some are very large and handsome, and guarded by curious stone animals. I inspected some artificial fish-tanks, the lowest of which is periodically drained by means of an endless chain of buckets, worked by a treadmill. This is a method of moving water very commonly used for purposes of irrigation, and the oddest thing about it is that the owners carry home all their buckets and chains every night, lest their neighbours should steal them!

Near the village stands an exceedingly old tumble-down temple, with a multitude of halls, shrines, and altars, but all were deserted save by one very old priest, who offered me the only luxury he possessed, in the form of cigarettes. I ventured to offer him a coin of the value of a shilling, and he seemed quite delighted. He seems to do all the praying for the village, and always keeps the lamps burning before the great altar. But the gods, which are many and hideous, are all coated with the accumulated dust and dirt of many years, apparently beyond his powers of cleansing, and by no means suggestive of popular reverence.

The people, numbering many hundreds, were all on the shore, dredging sand from the river-bed. Of course they were all dressed in blue, for in China only the exceptionally extravagant few indulge in more expensive dyes; and what with the many shades of blue crowds, blue mountains, and blue river sands, the colouring was singularly harmonious and agreeable.

When the barbers had finished their work, and the crew had enjoyed a gossip with some of their friends, they poled us to the mouth of the river, whence the night tide took us up to the village of Kung-kow (where we had halted on the first day to sketch the ruined bridge), and where we are now anchored for the night.

March 9th.

I woke to see a red moon set behind purple hills to westward, while the red sun rose from behind the eastern range. It was a very grand scene. In order to profit by the lovely morning, we took the gig and rowed up a small stream to a mandarin's house, which Sam thought we ought to visit. Fortunately the great man was absent, so his women-folk had no scruples about being seen; and we were most hospitably entertained by his old mother, his wives, and a crowd of other women, who gave us tea, and examined us and our clothes with a minute interest which was quite reciprocal, for while they were much amused by our grey and scarlet knitted under-petticoats, we were equally occupied in admiring their pretty white trousers daintily embroidered in colour. I think they are peculiar to this district, but am not sure, not having previously ventured on prosecuting my researches further than the exquisitely embroidered plaited skirts and bright-coloured under-petticoats, also plaited and embroidered.

Having taken leave most ceremoniously, we left the boat to return empty, while we made our way back to the village by narrow paths between swampy rice-fields, which patient men and buffaloes were ploughing knee-deep in mud with wooden ploughs. Equally uninviting seemed to me the toil of the women engaged in grubbing for water-chestnuts, which also involves working knee-deep in mud—a hateful task, and very ill remunerated, five cents being a full day's wage. We explored another deserted old temple with many dusty shrines and dilapidated idols.

At every group of houses we passed, people came out to interview us and invite us to enter; all were most civil. Everywhere we noticed that they were weaving grass-cloth. It proved rather a tedious walk, and we were glad when we got back to the great banyan-trees, where I stood on stepping-stones in the mud to secure a last sketch, which Sam protected with a large paper umbrella, as it had begun to rain, which caused our numerous blue-clothed followers to cower among the great wide-spreading roots — and very picturesque they looked. We also had a lovely

view of the Fonding Peaks, heaped up one above the other, range beyond range. Moreover, all along these shores there are immense orange and other orchards, so that from every hillock you look down on rich fruit or corn land. The said hillocks are generally crowned with fine old fir-trees.

Some fishers, both men and women, were drawing a seine-net very near us, so we hailed them and bought a quantity of delicate little fish like transparent eels, which proved a dainty breakfast.

Presently the servant and coolies, who had been sent to the Consulate for our letters and fresh supplies, arrived well laden, and we then returned to the point whence we started yesterday, and where the sand-dredgers were still working like a busy ant-hill. Then we sailed a little way up the Yuen-ke river, and anchored beside a small rocky isle, on which is perched a very pretty temple, coloured crimson, with grey curved roofs and wide overhanging balconies ; also a tall, many-storeyed yellow pagoda. A couple of fine old trees have contrived to root themselves in the crevices of the rock, their dark foliage and white stems completing a charming picture, which is faithfully mirrored in the still waters. Add to this a background of steep river-banks crested with old banyans and other timber, steep stone steps leading up to quaint houses, and beyond these fir-crowned hills all dotted with horse-shoe graves. And far up the river lie the beautiful blue mountains.

As for foreground, wherever we halt there is an ever-varying combination of most sketchable boats of all sorts, with odd, movable roofs, great sails of grass or bamboo, and passengers in huge hats and large paper umbrellas.

We landed on the rocky isle, and were welcomed by a very courteous old priest, who did the honours of the cleanest temple I have seen in China. Everything about it is pretty, both inside and out. The principal shrine is to the Goddess of Mercy, with the young child in her arms, flowers and lights on the altar, and rosaries for the use of worshippers. I did covet a charming image of the goddess in white porcelain, and especially a picture in colours with halo of gold, exactly like a fine medieval saint. I observe, however, that Buddhist saints are generally represented with each foot resting on a water-lily, instead of carrying a lily in the hand.

The priest gave us tea, and when we had returned to our boat he sent me a present of two very quaint prints of mythological subjects. We had no suitable gifts to offer him, so ventured to send a dollar as a "kumsha," which was graciously accepted.

Here, and at various other places, I have been much amused by watching carefully-trained cormorants fishing at the bidding of their masters. They are here called Lu-tze or Yu-ying—*i.e.*, fish-hawk. The simplest form of fishery is when a poor fisherman has constructed for himself a raft consisting only of from four to eight bamboos lashed together. On this he sits poised (crowned with a large straw hat), and before him are perched half-a-dozen of these odd uncanny-looking black birds waiting his command. The cage in which they live and the basket in which he stores his fish complete his slender stock-in-trade. The marvel is how he contrives to avoid overturning his frail raft.

Sometimes several fishers form partnership, and start a co-operative business. They invest in a shallow punt, and a regiment of perhaps twenty or more of these solemn sombre birds sit on perches at either end of the punt, each having a hempen cord fastened round the throat just below the pouch, to prevent its swallowing any fish it may catch. Then, at a given signal, all the cormorants glide into the water, apparently well aware of the disadvantage of scaring their prey.

Their movements below the surface are very swift and graceful as they dart in pursuit of a fish or an eel, and giving it a nip with their strong hooked beak, swallow it, and continue hunting. Sometimes they do not return to the surface till they have secured several fish, and their capacious pouch is quite distended, and sometimes the tail of a fish protrudes from their gaping bill. Then they return to the surface, and at the bidding of their keepers disgorge their prey, one by one, till the pouch is empty, when they again receive the signal to dive, and resume their pursuit.

Some birds are far more expert than others, and rarely fail to secure their prize; but sometimes they catch a fish, or more often an eel, so awkwardly that they cannot contrive to swallow it, and in the effort to arrange this difficulty the victim manages to escape. If one bird catches a large and troublesome fish, two or three of its friends occasionally go to the aid of their comrade, and help him to despatch it. Such brotherly kindness is, however, by no means invariable, and sometimes, when a foolish young bird has captured a fish, the old hands pursue and rob him of his prize. At other times a bird fails in its trick, and after staying under water for a very long period, comes up quite crestfallen without a fish.

When the birds are tired the strap is removed from their throat, and they are rewarded with a share of the fish, which they catch

as it is thrown to them. It is reckoned a good day's fishing if eighteen or twenty cormorants capture a dollar's worth of fish; and as so many birds represent about half-a-dozen owners, it is evidently not a very lucrative business.

The birds are quite domestic, having all been reared in captivity. Curiously enough, the mothers are so careless that they cannot be trusted to rear their own young; and furthermore, the said young are so sensitive to cold weather that only the four or five eggs laid in early spring are considered worth hatching, as only these can be reared in the warm summer. They are taken from the cormorant and given to a hen, who apparently must be colour-blind, as she calmly accepts these green eggs in lieu of her own. She is not, however, subjected to the misery of seeing her nurslings take to the water, as they are at once removed from her care when, after a month's incubation, the poor little fledglings make their appearance. They are then transferred to baskets which are kept in a warm corner, the young birds being buried in cotton wool and fed with pellets of raw fish and bean-curd.

When they are two months old their nursery days are over, and the sorrows of education must begin. They are therefore offered for sale, a female bird being valued at from 3s. to 5s., and a male bird at double the price. This difference is due to the superior strength of the latter, which enables it to capture larger fish. Thenceforth the professional trainer takes them in hand; and fastening a string to one leg, he drives them into the water and throws small live fishes, which they are expected to catch. They are taught to go and return subject to different calls on a whistle, obedience being enforced by the persuasive strokes of a bamboo—the great educational factor in China! When thoroughly trained, a male bird is valued at from 20s. to 30s., and its fishing career is expected to continue for five years, after which it will probably become old and sickly.[1]

[1] We are so accustomed to think of fishing with cormorants as a purely Chinese occupation, that it is somewhat startling to learn that this was one of the sports in high favour both in France and England in the seventeenth century, and that consequently those who now practise it in Britain are merely reviving a forgotten art of their forefathers.

Amongst the items of expenditure for King James I. mention is made of £30 which in A.D. 1611 was paid to John Wood, Master of the Cormorants, for his trouble in bringing up and training of certain fowls called cormorants, and making of them fit for the use of fishing.

In the following year a second sum of £30 was assigned him, "to travel into some of the farther parts of this realm for young cormorants, which afterwards are to be made fit for his Majesty's sport and recreation."

Six years later, his Majesty rented a portion of the vine-garden near Westminster Abbey, and there caused nine fish-ponds to be dug and stocked with roach, dace,

I am told that cormorants are not the only creatures whose natural fishing propensities have been turned to good account by the Chinese (who seem fully to recognise that a keen poacher may be transformed into a good gamekeeper!) Far up the great Yang-tze river, in the neighbourhood of Tchang, the fishers train real otters to work for them, which they are said to do with surprising obedience and intelligence. I have not, however, heard of this use of otters in any other part of the country.

As for the cormorants, they seem to be common to all the great rivers and canals, and are only one of a thousand methods whereby the swarming fish-legions are captured, for every known species of net is here ceaselessly at work—hand-nets and casting-nets, bag-nets and trawls, ground-nets and pushing-nets, fish-spears, hooks and lines of every description for fresh-water and for deep-sea fishing.

CHAPTER VII.

LIFE ON THE RIVER.

Chinese inns!—Missions in their infancy—Eccentric house-building—A typical village—Kindly people—Dubious people—Flight!—The Bohea tea-country—A thunderstorm—A spate—Wood-pirates—Return to Foo-Chow.

ON THE MIN RIVER,
March 10*th*.

TO-DAY we have been travelling with quite a fleet. About thirty large boats and a great company of small ones are all working up the main river, so we all rowed and poled in company, till a sharp breeze sprang up, and we flew up stream, till the darkness has compelled us to anchor for the night.

March 11*th*.

With the earliest glimmer of dawn we were once more on our way, and about sunrise we met another foreign house-boat coming down stream. The crews of such boats are always on the alert, justly assuming that their respective owners may wish to exchange ideas. In the present instance the foreigners proved to be Bishop

tench, carp, and barbel. A brick building was erected here as the cormorants' house, and here the King came to see the birds fish. He also established cormorant-fishing near Thetford, in Norfolk, and at Theobalds, in Hertfordshire, which was his favourite hunting-seat.

Burdon and two clerical friends, who in the course of their journey have had a somewhat unpleasant little adventure, a thief having cut his way in through the wall of the native house in which they were sleeping, and contrived to abstract not only their food, but also the clothes and watch of one of the gentlemen. Fortunately the bishop had a spare suit, which was not abstracted, so he was able to clothe his chaplain, and we were able to replenish their commissariat for the day.

Travellers in China must put up with queer lodgings when once they have to leave their boats, and very odd food into the bargain. I have heard of one inn in the Ningpo district where the only food to be obtained was cold rice, considerably singed, and snakes fried in lamp-oil! As there was nothing else to be had, and as the traveller, being disguised as a Chinaman, did not wish to betray his nationality by over-fastidiousness, he was compelled to try and swallow this noxious preparation!

Very often the only sleeping-room of the village hotel is a loft, to which access is obtained by a rickety ladder. It is so low in the roof that an average-sized man cannot stand upright. Here are arranged half-a-dozen or more beds, which consist only of wooden boards raised on rude trestles to a couple of feet above the ground, and on which is spread a coarse rush-mat! If the weather is cold, a filthy wadded cotton quilt is added, that the sleeper may therein wrap himself up. The weary wayfarer climbs up to this horrid attic, and if he is not knocked back by the stifling atmosphere, he can pick his way by the light of a dim oil-lamp (the lamp is probably a joint of bamboo) till he finds a vacant bed, and can thereon rest—with all his clothes on, however, for it would be a risky matter to put off any article of dress, lest it should vanish in the night. No pillow being provided, an umbrella sometimes does duty instead.

Too often even weariness brings no rest, by reason of the multitude of fleas and other vermin, while probably in the kitchen below men are cooking at a wood-fire (the stinging smoke of which finds its way into the sleeping-room), while others are snoring or smoking opium, and dogs outside are barking continuously.

Then, even where curiosity is quite kindly, it is generally excessive: every corner from which a glimpse of the foreigner can be obtained is eagerly secured, and every detail of washing, dressing, praying, eating, is a subject of keen interest to the spectators, however hateful to the objects of their curiosity.

The crowd thus drawn together may partly be the reason why

private houses so rarely offer a traveller a night's shelter. Sometimes, however, when the village inn is too atrocious, a kindly Buddhist priest agrees to let strangers sleep in the temple—a strange lodging indeed, especially when, as sometimes happens, an ecclesiastical house-cleaning is going on, and the whole multitude of idols of all sizes are standing about, here, there, and everywhere, in process of being cleaned or repaired—a proof of feebleness which often leads to a suggestive talk with their guardian (and truly I know of no sight more disillusionising than that of a company of dilapidated gods undergoing repair!) You can quite understand that such descriptions of Chinese village inns do not make me particularly eager to attempt much inland travel!

The bishop and his friends have been visiting an exceedingly interesting group of very small native congregations which have sprung up in a great many remote villages on the north side of the river. Many of these are especially interesting from the manner in which they have evolved themselves from infinitesimal germs. Perhaps one man has chanced to visit some other town or village where a foreign preacher or native catechist was addressing the people, or perhaps selling Christian books, of which the traveller bought one just for curiosity, and the word spoken or read has taken such root that he has again started on his travels and gone to some place where he knows that there are Christians who can tell him more of this new doctrine.

So he stays a while for instruction, and buys more books, and then goes back to his village; and though friends and relations deem him mad, and beat him on the face and boycott him because he will not subscribe to idol feasts, nevertheless he holds on steadfastly, never ceasing to tell them of One whose service he has found to be far better than that of the idols; and he perseveres in prayer for them all. At last, when he has stood utterly alone for perhaps seven or eight years, a reaction commences, and many regret that they have been so cruel to one who has only tried to do them good. Then half-a-dozen decide that they will be Christians, and a few months later half-a-dozen more; and within four or five years there are perhaps sixty or a hundred Christians in that village—real earnest men, whom no amount of persecution, social or official, can turn from their quiet consistent Christian lives.

Then comes such a curious incident as occurred at the village of Hai-yew, where, more than half the inhabitants having become Christians, the ancestral hall was amicably divided between the two parties: the Christians, being the more numerous, occupied

the centre and one side, while the heathen, with their poor gods deposed from the place of honour, retained the other side, but had to do without the accustomed idol processions, being too few to raise the necessary funds.

In such a village the houses of the Christians are distinguished at a glance on entering, the one having the invariable incense burning before the ancestral tablets or the favourite god, whereas the others have simply scrolls bearing Christian mottoes.

From time to time a messenger arrives from some village which has thus been feeling its own way to the Light, to request that it may be provided with a catechist of its own; and now the chief difficulty is to provide a supply of suitable trained men.

The Church of England Mission now reckons about one thousand adherents in these scattered villages, each tiny flock being in charge of a native catechist, while several such congregations form a pastorate, in charge of an ordained Chinese clergyman.

The majority of this particular group of villages lie scattered among the head-waters of that river which joins the Min at Tchui-kow, the village where we turned back. But both the Church of England and the American Missions have stations much farther up the Min itself.

A special interest seems to me to attach to the work of one of the native catechists, who has devoted himself to the care of a leper village in the neighbourhood of the city of Ku-cheng, where all who suffer from that dread disease are compelled to live apart from their fellow-creatures—an outcast colony of most miserable sufferers. To these has been carried that message of mercy which gladdened the lepers of Judea, and some have received it gladly, and have claimed their right to admission into the Christian Church.

The scenery is becoming more beautiful as we advance, and the villages more picturesque. Some are like *châlets* built on piles; others like English farm-houses of the old Sussex type, with cross-beams of blackwood, fitted in with white plaster. It does seem so odd to watch men building a house in this country—putting a heavy roof on to a mere skeleton framework of timber. But this is done throughout China, the walls having no share whatever in the support of the roof. They are filled in afterwards at the pleasure of the owner with whatever material he can most readily command, whether brick and mortar, lath and plaster, shingles or stone. In erecting the wooden framework, it is considered rather artistic to use a crooked tree as a main pillar—a tree which may

perhaps have had the bark removed, but has not been otherwise "improved" by any carpenter.

Again this morning a keen breeze (which on this river is somewhat rare luck) sent us flying up stream, and we anchored at about 5 P.M. at Tchui-kow, a most interesting village, about seventy miles from Foo-Chow. The backs of its very picturesque, tall, narrow, crowded houses (with curly roofs and wide verandahs) are built on piles overhanging the river, while the front of the said houses, facing the street, is founded on the rock. All up the hill these houses cluster in groups, each group enclosed by a strong fire-proof wall.

The main street is strangely characteristic, with the blue-clad crowd thronging its open-air stalls and shops, where all manner of food is displayed in huge tubs, especially preparations of fish, pink, grey, and silvery, but all alike smelly. Multitudinous pigs, chickens, and dogs mingle with the crowd; and, strange to say, the dogs were as civil as their masters—not one of them barked at the foreign women. I suppose they had taken stock of Sam, and considered his respectability a sufficient guarantee for ours.

As I was gazing up at one of the long flights of little narrow stairs leading up the face of the rock between the houses, the bystanders signed to me to go up, which I accordingly did (Mrs De Lano, being tired, remained below, but the faithful Sam escorted me). Presently we came to a little door, which was locked, but was immediately opened by a small boy, who led us up another long flight of very narrow stairs cut in the rock, till at last we found ourselves in a dwelling-house, with a very pretty shrine to the Goddess of Mercy, strangely resembling a Roman Catholic chapel. The image of the mother with the young child is strikingly graceful, and the altar-vases of old grey crackling are filled with pink China roses, like the monthly roses so familiar to us all at home.

Though my sudden apparition must certainly have been startling, the young man of the house received me with the utmost courtesy, and immediately produced tea. It is a quaintly pretty house, with carved blackwood furniture and little dwarf trees growing in handsome China vases. The view, seen from the "lucky" circular windows, is most fascinating, looking up the river to the sharp mountain-peaks, which, as the sun sank, were bathed in a transparent rose-coloured haze. My host evidently delighted in its beauty, and offered to lead me up more flights of steps to other buildings on the rock, which I would fain have explored, but

judged it prudent to return to the boat, where we found the crew much elated at having purchased very strong large paper umbrellas for twenty-five cents, their value at Foo-Chow being about double that sum.

Speaking of stout paper manufactures, I find that, in addition to all the other merits of the beautiful lotus (whose seeds and root are as good for food as the flowers are delightful to the eye), a good strong paper is prepared from its leaves. Also, as a substitute for brown paper, a capital sort of strong tough packing-paper is prepared from the bark of the keo-tree, which, having been mixed with lime and well steamed over boiling water, is then crushed with a stone hammer, and left in a pit to steep. Eventually it is reduced to pulp, and then a small quantity at a time is lifted out on a flat mould made of split bamboo, and having been made to overspread it smoothly, is left to stiffen. Thus sheet after sheet of "leather paper" is produced, and a very good serviceable material it is.

Wed., 12*th.*

A clear, beautiful dawn, so I mercilessly roused King-Song to give me breakfast, and then rowed ashore, escorted by Sam, and ascended to a very good sketching-point, overlooking town, river, and mountains. There I was able to work in comfort till noon, being so happily placed that the admiring crowd could not disturb me. They were exceedingly polite, and, as usual, greatly delighted with my opera-glasses.

Returning boatward by a new route, we passed through some queer little courts, where I was welcomed by various very clean, nice-looking, neatly dressed women, with glossy hair, and wearing pretty silver ornaments in the shape of butterflies or dragon-flies marked with lucky symbols, the colour being given by bright blue and green enamel. These are made in much the same manner as copper enamel vases. The divisions of the pattern are marked out on the groundwork of silver with silver-gilt wires, which are soldered in their place, and the cell thus formed is covered with borax. The enamel, which is prepared in a fine paste of various colours, is then applied, mixed with borax and water, and the flame of a blow-pipe is applied to melt it to a beautifully smooth surface.

One nice old lady who had sat close beside me on the hill while I was sketching insisted on my going into her house to tea. At the same time others craved the opera-glasses, and I own I felt

nervous as I saw them vanish in the crowd, while I, not knowing a word of Chinese, was carried off up-stairs, to see another family, etiquette forbidding the faithful Sam to follow.

I was welcomed by a fine old couple—a blind mother and half-blind father—and several pretty, gentle girls. Here, as usual, the family altar and ancestral tablets occupied the prominent place of honour in the principal room. Just as I was beginning to feel somewhat uneasy about the prolonged absence of my dear glasses, they were brought back and returned with many expressions of gratitude. Sam said they had been carried off for exhibition to some one at the other end of the town! I need scarcely say that on these occasions I always find some good pretext for giving them a severe rubbing ere taking them into use myself!

Many other women urged me to visit their homes, but as time was speeding on I was obliged, very reluctantly, to decline, merely glancing into some, in all of which I noticed the gaily-decked household altar with the domestic gods. Feeling, however, that the opportunity was unique, I went into one other house. The lower storey was a joss-house of some sort, and up-stairs a very gaudy altar, images, and carving, in addition to the ancestral tablets. Tea was brought as usual, but I had foolishly told Sam to follow me up-stairs, whereupon all the women immediately retired; so we proceeded on our way, only halting to admire the wonderfully delicate refinement of the wood-carving on a very fine old temple, now in process of restoration. All round the raised platform of the temple-theatre are excellent carvings, in miniature, of men and horses. The freshness of their bright new gilding seemed strangely in contrast with the broken pavement, where a careless step would have landed us ankle-deep in foulest mud. That, however, is truly characteristic of a Chinese town, even in official halls and courtyards.

I felt quite sorry to leave so interesting a place and such pleasant, kindly people, especially as we had decided that this was to be our farthest point; but I was anxious to see something of Ahn-ing-kay, an exceedingly picturesque village which had attracted our notice on the way up by its many-gabled houses, bearing so strange a resemblance to old houses in Chester. There are the same crossbeams of blackwood, filled in with white stone or plaster, but the grey tiled roofs assumed curves undreamt of by English builders, whether ancient or modern. These houses, which are two and three storeys high, stand elevated along the river's broken bank, which here, as at many other villages, is crowned with noble

old banyan-trees, with great twisted stems and far-spreading roots. Here, once for all, I must mention a very unromantic feature in all these river-side villages—namely, that beneath the shadow of these great banyans are ranged enormous and most unfragrant vats, standing sometimes singly, sometimes in groups of from ten to twenty-five. These are the receptacles for all the sewage of the village—very valuable property, most carefully stored for agricultural use. This is not a nice subject; but the great vats occupy such very conspicuous positions that a realistic draughtsman cannot possibly omit them from his sketches, their introduction being always particularly interesting to the very accurate Chinese spectators!

Our crew being ravenous, we left them all to feed, while Mrs De Lano and I went ashore by ourselves. We found at once that the people were a very inferior lot to those we had just left, being of a far rougher and more boisterous type, and inclined to crowd us disagreeably. They became more respectful, however, as soon as I stopped to sketch a curious rice-pounding implement; and when I ventured to produce the opera-glasses the effect was magical—in fact they produced quite a *furore*, and every one eagerly craved a turn.

They were now quite friendly, and we wandered on, sketching various objects of interest. We explored a rough path, over huge masses of red rock, till we reached a ridge looking down on another village in another valley. There I left Mrs De Lano to rest, while a select party of the crowd led me up long flights of rock-cut steps to a hill-top, whence the view was splendid. On my return I found that Mrs De Lano had been much worried by the importunity of some of the women, who tried to insist on her going down to the other village. (Had she done so, I have little doubt she would have been robbed.) As it was, so dense a crowd had assembled, that, even with the aid of my select body-guard, our walk back was not very pleasant.

Supposing we were to spend the night here, we only returned to the boat at dusk, but found the boatmen in a fever of impatience, begging us to let them start at once, as this village bears such an evil reputation that no boat dares stay there after dusk! They affirm that the inmates of three hundred houses in this and the neighbouring villages are known to be simply pirates; in short, they insisted on starting instantly, which we accordingly did. The men rowed and poled for a couple of hours in the starlight, and then anchored in a quiet backwater at Min-ching, where many

other boats had already congregated for the night, and where we know we may now sleep securely.

(We learnt afterwards that the alarm had not been groundless, for that at this very village Dr Osgood's boat was attacked and robbed—he himself was speared in the foot, and only escaped by leaping overboard and swimming. A lady of the party was shot in the shoulder. Truly I am thankful to have had no such misadventure to chronicle !)

This is our first stage of retrogression on the return journey, and I confess I am exceedingly sorry to be unable to extend our wanderings into the far-famed Bohea tea-country, which we have almost reached.

Judging not only from the enthusiastic descriptions of men who have been all over it, but from the more reliable ocular proofs of admirable photographs by an enterprising German, the scenery must be marvellously grand and unique. The mountains tower to a height of from 6000 to 8000 feet, and the river winds amid majestic crags, all broken up into amazingly fantastic forms—gigantic towers, cyclopean columns, and ramparts.

The principal cultivators of the Bohea tea are Buddhist monks, whose very numerous monasteries nestle in the most picturesque fashion among the huge rocks, many being perched on summits of perpendicular precipices, which, seen from the river, appear to be wholly inaccessible.

The tea-fields where these agricultural brethren toil so diligently are most irregular patches of ground, of every size and shape, scattered here, there, and everywhere among these rocky mountains; but, like all Chinese gardening, the tea-cultivation is exquisitely neat, and the multitude of carefully clipped little bushes have a curiously formal appearance, in contrast with the reckless manner in which Nature has tossed about the fragments of her shattered mountains.

I need scarcely say that I long to see all that wonderful district, and it is tantalising to have to turn back when we are so near; but it would involve a good deal of land travel, and even on the river we could only go in a native boat, all of which has been voted unsafe for ladies without an escort. At first one of our friends who knows the district well had arranged to accompany us, but his wife's illness unfortunately prevented his doing so; so there is nothing for it but resolutely, though reluctantly, to turn away and solace ourselves with the tamer beauty of this lower river.

Speaking of tea, my impressions of "the fragrant leaf" as being

the natural heritage of every Chinaman have been rudely dispelled by learning that although in this district tea may well be the luxury of the poorest, since the Bohea tea-growers receive only the modest sum of a penny per lb.,[1] this is by no means the case throughout China. In the south-western provinces of Kwang-si and Yun-nan, and also in the northern provinces of Shan-tung, Shan-si, and Honan, it ranks as a luxury, and the mass of the peasantry solace themselves by sipping small cups of simple boiling water and trying hard to imagine it tea!

U.S. CONSULATE, *March 15th.*

From our anchorage in the still waters at Min-ching we started at sunrise, when all the hills were glorified by soft hazy effects of light. Soon after, we met friends (Mr and Mrs Odell) in their own house-boat, and they recommended us to explore a tributary stream called Tchu-kee-kow—advice on which we fortunately acted. It is a narrow, very winding stream, with pretty villages, and beyond lies a range of magnificent peaks, which, as we saw them, were intensely blue.

We landed for a lovely walk along a fir-crested ridge, where we gathered brilliant scarlet dwarf azalea, which is now in bloom all over the hills. Each flower is the size of a halfpenny, but the stem only ranges from four to ten inches in height.

A most lovely pink sunset, with heavy grey clouds, was succeeded by a magnificent thunderstorm, with intensely vivid lightning, which seemed to streak the sky with bars of white light. We hastened back to the boats, where the men had made all secure in preparation for a storm; and well for us that they had done so, for in a few moments down came the rain with terrific violence, just as though a waterspout had burst over our devoted heads.

In half an hour the rain had ceased, but the river was in flood. It was evident that every mountain torrent had come raging down every gully in the mountain forests, and sweeping down quantities of cut logs all ready for the market. Such valuable firewood was a prize most precious to the boatmen, who were wild with excitement, and they spent the evening rowing about in the gig, which they filled again and again, till they had rescued such a quantity that every corner of the boat was crammed and the decks were piled up with this precious salvage. As we hoped to reach Foo-

[1] Ere that lb. can be delivered in England, it must bear not only expenses of freight, but also a duty of $2\frac{3}{4}$d. in China and 6d. in London.

Chow on the following day, the inconvenience to us was small compared with the value of the prize to the crew.

The capture was so exciting that we helped them by holding lanterns and candles, with a plate held over the glass shade to prevent their blowing out. We saw lights moving all along the shore, and asked the head boatman what they were. "Men stealing wood," he replied, and we forbore comment. It certainly was better that the crew should get what they could than that the wood should float seaward; its rightful owners could never recover it.

But next day we saw a good deal of genuine theft. We awoke to find the whole plain flooded. The green fields on which yesterday we had looked with such pleasure were now a dreary expanse of grey mud, and poor villagers dressed in grass rain-cloaks and huge bamboo hats were floundering about in search of firewood. The mountains, which had at sunset been so gloriously blue, were now dim grey ghosts, scarcely visible through the mist. Wood-rafts were taking advantage of the flood to effect a rapid journey down the stream, whereon still floated many logs, so our men went on collecting treasure all the way.

About noon we reached an immense stone bridge, similar to that which connects the island suburb of Foo-Chow with the capital. This has twenty-four massive stone piers, each connected by one huge granite slab about thirty feet long! A stone balustrade on either side protects the blue-clothed crowds which for ever cross and recross, and which to-day were gazing with unusual interest at the wood-rafts in their perilous endeavours to shoot past the bridge, towards which they were carried with frightful rapidity and force. Many came to grief, and those which did get through in safety became helplessly blocked in the crowd below. The method of passing under these bridges in going down stream strikes the uninitiated as peculiar, as the helmsman always steers directly for the pier, and just when the impending crash seems inevitable, he gives a sharp turn, which shoots the boat into mid-stream. So strong is the current, even at average times, that were he to aim at mid-stream he would inevitably hit the pier.

Seeing that we had no chance of getting on, we gave up the attempt, and lay still, watching the systematic way in which piratical sampans lay moored to the bridge, ready to slip out in a second, should a raft get into difficulties—not to help but to steal. Indeed they contrived to abstract logs from most of the rafts, by watching for the moment when any cause induced the raftsmen all

to look in one direction. It was the most barefaced piracy; and all the women stationed along the banks were on the watch to help their relations by hauling the stolen wood ashore. There was no shame or concealment in the matter.

I am told that this is always the way, and that, so far from helping in any trouble or accident, these people are always on the watch to steal, and the owners are left to drown. One reason for this callous conduct is, that if a Chinaman does save a man's life he is obliged by law to support him, or should he die on his hands he must defray his funeral expenses!

Three years ago, in the summer of 1876, there was the most appalling flood on record in this district. Rain fell continuously for two days, and every mountain stream came down in such torrents that the river not only overflowed the whole country round for many miles, but swept right over the top of the great bridge with a most appalling roar like that of continuous thunder-peals. It appeared almost miraculous that any bridge could have resisted the tremendous pressure of such a volume of water. Marvellous to relate, when the flood subsided it was found that the only damage sustained by this grand bridge was the loss of a small portion of its parapet!

But of the loss of life and property among the boat population and the inhabitants of the low-lying parts of the city it is impossible to form any estimate. Not only were numerous wood-rafts broken up, which, in sweeping down the stream, swamped and smashed innumerable boats, but many houses farther up the country were washed away, and one floated down bodily, with all its inhabitants. A man who was standing on the roof contrived to catch the overhanging bough of a tree, but all the others vainly cried for help, till their floating home came with a crash against the piers of the bridge, where it was of course dashed to pieces.

Above the roar of the raging waters rose the pitiful shrieks of the drowning, and of those who were killed by collisions of boats and falling timber. The whole scene was truly appalling to those who, from their homes overlooking the river, had to watch its fearful incidents, while wholly powerless to help, and seeing whole families of the drowned and drowning swept past them. But their pity was mingled with indignation as they watched many who might have saved the lives of these poor victims intent only on purloining timber and floating property. Indeed the city thieves deemed this an excellent opportunity for plunder. Some,

however, found themselves in the wrong, for the energetic governor of the province—the great Ting (who for three days and three nights never rested in his efforts to relieve the awful distress)—made short work of all thieves whom he succeeded in capturing, and no less than seventeen persons were summarily deprived of their heads as the just penalty of being caught looting.

When the waters subsided the usually fertile plain presented a lamentable scene of widespread desolation. All the young rice-crops, which on the eve of the flood had promised so rich a harvest, were destroyed, and in place of their lovely green there remained only a dreary expanse of mud.[1]

That was a year of terrible calamity for this beautiful city, for ere the inhabitants had well recovered breath after this grievous plague of waters, the wind claimed its innings, and a terrific typhoon overswept the plain, tearing up great trees by the roots, destroying houses, and causing frightful disasters among the shipping.

Then, as if jealous of the devastation wrought by wind and stream, fire claimed its turn. A spark from an old woman's oven lighted on some inflammable matter and set fire to a narrow street of wooden houses, whence the flames spread so rapidly that, notwithstanding the calmness of the weather, the conflagration very quickly covered a space two miles in length, presenting a spectacle of awful beauty as seen from the foreign settlement of Nantai. There are cases in which man's extremity is his brother man's opportunity, and an enterprising photographer secured a very fine photograph of the scene, with the dark smoke-clouds as the background for the river crowded with junks.

To return to time present. Our masts having been lowered to enable us to pass beneath the upper bridge, we were at last able to conclude our voyage. The boatmen were in the wildest spirits, rejoicing in returning home so well laden. We have found them a most pleasant lot of civil men, always on the look-out to do us any little service they could think of.

[1] In the month of June 1885 still more awful floods desolated the country round Canton; rivers and canals burst their embankments, whole villages were swept away, thousands of persons drowned, and the rice and silk crops totally destroyed. Pitiful are the details which tell how despairing parents climbed to the topmost branches of trees, and there securely fastened their children, deeming that they must be safe at such a height. But the floods surged onward in increasing might, uprooting and engulfing the very trees, and sweeping them away with their living freight. Pitiful, too, the sufferings of the starving population thus deluged by the rains, for which, through long years of drought, the northern provinces have so vainly prayed.

Now that we are safely housed, the weather seems tired of its long spell of good behaviour, for this morning is grey, and cold, and rainy.

CHAPTER VIII.

FEMALE MEDICAL MISSION.

American medical ladies—American feet—Native remedies—Preparation of snakes—Human blood—Future punishment of quacks—Chinese alms-houses.

U.S. Consulate.

In the last few days I have been greatly interested by a glimpse of the working of the American Medical Mission among the women of Foo-Chow. It has always seemed to me that of the various means whereby the Red Barbarians strive to bridge over the chasm which separates them from the Chinese population, none is so full of promise of ever-increasing usefulness as this Mission, which so unmistakably proves to the people the kindly intentions of those who devote their lives to this labour of love.

But I had not before fully realised how very important a part in this good work must of necessity be performed by women, as they alone can be admitted to the sick-room of their Chinese sisters. Curiously enough, this fact has as yet been practically recognised only by America, which has established fully qualified lady doctors at several of its principal mission-stations in China, where they are doing right good service. Hitherto I believe no English ladies have followed suit, but it is much to be hoped that they will do so ere long, for in no other way can they hope to gain such influence in Chinese homes.

Not having heard much on this subject, I confess to having been slightly astonished one morning when, hearing that Dr Trask and Dr Sparr had come by invitation to breakfast, I found that these professional titles described two pleasant, kindly American ladies, one being a bright young woman barely twenty-five years of age! With true kindness to the stranger, they had brought me a lovely and most fragrant branch of the richest pumelo (which is a kind of very large orange blossom) as a specimen of Foo-Chow cultivation. The elder lady is already a proficient in Chinese, and is able to visit her patients in their own homes. Her companion is

doing brave battle with the agonies of this excruciating language, and until it is mastered she has to confine her care to the charge of the dispensary and to nursing in the hospital.

She has, however, had extra work of late, for there have been several serious cases of small-pox in the foreign settlement, which for some reason the regular doctors were unable to attend; so the friends of the patients sent to entreat the medical aid of this lady (rather a delicate matter, as the members of the Mission are not allowed to take professional fees from any patient except the wealthier Chinese).

The brave lady consented to attend the sufferers, who happily have rewarded her care by making excellent recoveries. Her safe-guards were simple. Every morning she clothed herself in an india-rubber suit, to wear while in the infected houses, returning home to bathe, apply sundry disinfectants, and dress in clean calico ere going to her regular work in the dispensary. At nights she took turns with her medical companion to sit up, when necessary, watching any anxious case in their hospital for Chinese women.[1]

Within the last few months the senior doctor has had to perform about sixty surgical operations, some of which have been very difficult cases. She invited us to go and see the said hospital, which is a large, clean, airy room, where every possible care is taken for the comfort of the inmates. I was much struck by the bright intelligent faces of some of these, albeit worn with suffering; all seemed so truly grateful for the loving care bestowed on them.

There is one peculiarly distressing case, namely, that of a poor

[1] The advantages of sending out carefully trained medical women in connection with Christian missions have been fully proved. For women endowed with the talents and capacities for such work (and it is one which calls for very varied talents of a really high order), it would be difficult to conceive a more noble career. A society has recently been formed, in connection with the Women's Missionary Institute, Clapham Road, S.W., which provides a house of residence for missionary students at the London School of Medicine for Women during a four years' course of training in medicine, surgery, and midwifery, after which they are drafted to mission stations in all parts of the world, in connection with the Churches to which they respectively belong. Ladies who are inclined to take part in such work, and wish for particulars of admission, fees, &c., are requested to refer to Mrs Meredith, Women's Medical Mission House, 143 Clapham Road, London, S.W.

An older institution for precisely the same purpose is the ZENANA MEDICAL COLLEGE AND HOME, at 58 St George's Road (near Victoria Station), London, S.W. Here only a two years' course of study is required. Both these medical missions are able to tell of extensive good work done by those whom they have sent forth, but both state that, owing to lack of funds, they have reluctantly been compelled to refuse admission to many suitable candidates, anxious to be trained as medical missionaries, but who were unable to pay the fifty guineas per annum, which includes board, residence, and medical instruction. They therefore crave subscriptions from such as are willing thus to aid in this good work.

girl so wasted with disease that it has been necessary to amputate both her feet. But the good doctors look on her with especial satisfaction. They hope soon to supply her with American feet, which will be far more serviceable than the tottering "lily feet" of the noblest lady in the city. Moreover, they have good hopes that she will join the Mission and become a teacher.[1]

In proportion to the incalculable multitude of girls whose feet are distorted in compliance with the extraordinary requirements of Chinese custom, it is only wonderful that cases of diseased ankle-bones and mortification of the foot are not very much more common. As it is, though the process of bandaging involves years of torture (commencing at the age of six or nine years, till which time the feet are the natural size, and generally very neat and small), the victims rarely find their way to the hospitals directly on this account, though they are subject to frequent accidents from tumbles as they totter along on their poor big toes, which, with the tip of the heel-bone, is all that is admitted into the shoe, the other toes being folded under the instep.

There is a regular class of "foot-binders"—women whose profession it is to produce this horrible distortion, with the aid of long bandages of cotton cloth; and in the hands of an unskilful binder the process of torture is indefinitely prolonged. In any case there is generally great swelling of the foot and leg, and torturing corns and other forms of disease. Yet such is the force of distorted public opinion and the iron rule of fashion, that sometimes when in Christian schools the teacher (filled with compassion for a girl who cannot work by reason of the pain she is enduring) ventures to remove the bandages, then the tears flow still faster, for to remove these destroys her prospects in life—her value in the marriage market, where she would be despised as a large-footed plebeian! The lily-foot is thus "the guinea stamp," and, moreover, is a standard of artificial beauty as decided (though by no means so injurious) as tight-lacing in some countries nearer home. Though the custom is known to have been in force for fully a thousand years, no one knows which of the legends referring to its origin is authentic. One thing only is certain, namely, that even Chinese men cannot really put a stop to it. The only possible reform must be made by inducing Chinese mothers to spare their own young daughters from this torture, and to choose large-footed daughters-in-law.

[1] By the latest accounts I hear that these hopes have been in a great measure realised, and that she has recently made a very happy marriage.

Well may the Chinese appreciate, as they undoubtedly do, the work of this and all other Medical Missions, which bring to their aid the skill and tenderness of European or American trained nurses and doctors.

I must say, that bright clean rooms and orderly dispensaries are in striking contrast to such glimpses as we have obtained of the native charities which exist in all large Chinese cities, and which, however well designed in the first instance, certainly fall very far short of practical usefulness, and are, without exception, chiefly noted for their dirt and mismanagement. There are homes for old women and homes for old men, which are the dreariest of alms-houses—rows of dismal cells being arranged in the form of a quadrangle, divided into streets, and enclosed by a high wall. Here persons who have attained extreme old age are provided with food and a roof—an altar before which to offer worship to the guardian idol, and some sort of medical care.

Of the medicines administered we formed some notion on being informed that one of the industries of the Foo-Chow beggars is the rearing of snakes, which are purchased by the druggists and boiled down for medicinal use, just as in the old Gaelic legends.[1] Snake wine (which is a preparation of wine and water in which snakes have been boiled to a jelly) is deemed a famous febrifuge; snake's flesh is also considered excellent diet for invalids. The snake is treated as we treat eels: its head is cut off and its skin removed; the flesh is then fried or boiled, but instead of being eaten plain, it must be mixed with minced chicken.

Here and there, among the numerous odd varieties of street-stall, we see a quack doctor, who, seated beneath a great umbrella, offers infallible remedies for every evil that flesh is heir to. He deals largely in acupuncture and cupping with wooden cups. As regards internal medicines, he proves his stores genuine by displaying the skulls, paws, horns, skins, and skeletons of divers animals —such as bears, bats, crocodiles, tigers—bits of bark and roots, bunches of herbs, &c.

For a child stricken with fever these wise physicians prescribe a decoction of three scorpions, while dysentery is treated by acupuncture of the tongue! Pigeons' dung is the approved medicine for women during pregnancy! and water in which cockles have been boiled is considered the best remedy for skin-diseases, especially for persons recovering from small-pox.

The flesh of rats, dried and salted, is deemed an excellent hair-

[1] See 'In the Hebrides,' p. 54. By C. F. Gordon Cumming. Chatto & Windus.

restorer, and is eaten by women who detect any symptom of incipient baldness. A nicer preventive is the use of tea-oil, which is extracted from pounded tea-seed, from which also are prepared tablets of soap greatly in favour with Chinese ladies.

A remedy peculiarly repulsive to our ideas, but which here is much appreciated by aged persons, is human milk, which is sold in small cupfuls. The story of the Grecian daughter who thus saved the life of her father has here its counterpart in the dutiful daughter-in-law who deprived her baby of his supplies that she might sustain her husband's toothless old mother!—an act immensely applauded in popular story and illustrated in art.

As an antidote for the acute inflammation of the skin caused by the poisonous sap of the chï-shu or varnish tree, which is used by the lacquer-workers, a crab's liver is administered in a strong decoction of pine-shavings. The latter is especially worthy of note, now that we too have discovered so many excellent properties in pine-resin.

But of course there are some genuine medicines in use. Foremost among these is a tonic of the nature of gentian root, to which almost supernatural virtues are attributed. This is the famous ginseng, which is the dried root of a wild herb, the *Panax quinquefolia*, of which considerable quantities are imported from Corea, Tartary, and the United States, but that which is found in the Chinese Empire is the most highly prized of all. It is an imperial monopoly, and is sold to the ginseng dealers for its weight in gold. In their hands, however, its value increases in an even more startling manner than does the price of drugs in the hands of the British chemist, for though ginseng of inferior quality is sold at 25s. to 50s. an ounce, the more valuable pieces fetch from 300 to 400 dollars per ounce! Such precious roots are stored in silken wrappings, within dainty boxes with silken covers, stowed within large air-tight boxes—for a root so precious is worthy of all care.

But to counterbalance one real tonic the Celestials have a score of eccentric medicines. Thus in a list of 78 animal, 50 mineral, and 314 vegetable medicines enumerated in one of the standard Chinese medical works translated by Dr Hobson of the London Medical Mission, I find such curious items as dried "red-spotted lizard, silkworm moth, parasite of mulberry-trees, asses' glue, tops of hartshorn, birds' nests, beef and mutton, black-lead, white-lead, stalactite, asbestos, tortoise-shell, human milk, stags' horns and bones, dogs' flesh, and ferns," all recommended as tonics.

Burnt straw, oyster-shell, gold and silver leaf, iron filings, and the bones and tusks of dragons, are stated to be astringent.

The so-called dragons' bones, by the way, are the fossil remains of the megatherium and other extinct animals which are found in Sze-Chuen and elsewhere, both in Asia and Europe, and which our own Anglo-Saxon ancestors esteemed so highly for medicinal purposes; indeed, any one acquainted with the leechdoms of our own forefathers might suppose in glancing over these Chinese prescriptions that he was reading the medical lore of Britain until the eighteenth century! There is the identical use of ingredients selected apparently solely on account of their loathsomeness, such as the ordure of divers animals, from man down to goats, rabbits, and silkworms; there are preparations of fossil shells, of red marble, of old copper cash, of wormwood and saffron, dragons' blood and dried leeches, human bones and human blood, flowers, metals and minerals, dried toads, scorpions, cicadas, centipedes, spotted snakes, black snakes, shed skins of snakes, the bones, sinews, and dried blood of tigers, rhinoceros-horn shavings, various insects,—these, and innumerable kindred horrors, hold a conspicuous place in the Chinese pharmacopœia.

Nor are these the worst. There are certain diseases which the physicians declare to be incurable, save by a decoction of which the principal ingredient is warm human flesh, cut from the arm or thigh of a living son or daughter of the patient! To supply this piece of flesh is (naturally!) esteemed one of the noblest acts of filial devotion, and there are numerous instances on record in quite recent years in which this generous offering has been made to save the life of a parent, and even of a mother-in-law! A case which was held up for special commendation in the 'Official Gazette' of Peking for July 5, 1870, was that of a young girl who had actually tried herself to cut the flesh from her thigh to save the life of her mother, but finding her courage fail, she had cut off two joints of her finger, and dropped the flesh into the medicine, which happily proved equally efficacious—for, says the 'Official Gazette,' "this act of filial piety OF COURSE had its reward, in the immediate recovery of the mother." This case called forth "boundless laudations" from the Governor-General of the province of Kiang-si, who begged that the Emperor would bestow some exemplary reward on the child, such as the erection of a great triumphal arch of carved stone, to commemorate the act.

In less serious cases a medicine compounded of the eyes and vitals of the dead is believed to be efficacious, and it is supposed

After death he was deified, and is now worshipped by all devout carpenters. When suffering from ulcers they visit his pagoda, pick out a morsel of ancient cement from between the bricks, powder it and swallow it, with a large admixture of faith![1]

It appears then that, however well meant, the native dispensary cannot be regarded as a very valuable institution. As to other forms of Chinese charity, I hear of clothing clubs, soup-kitchens, distributions of rice, and caldrons of tea bestowed gratis on all thirsty souls; but the most characteristic form of benevolence consists in presenting coffins to the temples, to be awarded by the priests to the most deserving poor. This last is a very favourite way of accumulating merit, and is one which is immensely appreciated, as there is an assured respectability in the possession of a good coffin, and to watch the seasoning of such an one is a delightful occupation for the leisure of declining years.

Though such almshouses as I have seen are assuredly most uninviting refuges for old age, I am told that in some cases they are really quite comfortable: such, for example, is a Widows' Home for ladies of good quality who by some sad chance are left homeless. It is called the "Hall of Rest for Pure Widows," under which title are included not only the faithful widows who do not incline to a second marriage, but also those true-hearted maidens who, having been betrothed in early youth, have vowed on the death of their affianced spouse to remain faithful to his memory. So great is this virtue esteemed in the Celestial Empire, that in various parts of the country I have seen really magnificent triple triumphal arches of the finest carved stone-work erected in honour of such unwedded brides or faithful widows!

Strange to say, the survivor of such betrothed pairs (whether man or maid) occasionally goes through the whole solemn ceremonial of a Chinese wedding, with the funeral tablet which represents the dear (unknown) deceased. Thus a living man confers honours on his dead bride, which consoles her in the spirit-world. On the other hand, a living maid thus wedded to the tablet of her dead lord forsakes her own family and is entitled to the position of a daughter-in-law in the house of her husband's mother. Truly it must be conceded that these are very odd people.

[1] How strangely the superstitions of East and West correspond! In the autumn of 1885 the daily papers record how at the Chapel of Knock in Ireland, said to have been recently honoured by an apparition of the Blessed Virgin, and now a favourite place of pilgrimage, thousands of devotees are picking out fragments of cement from the chapel wall, which cement, being reduced to powder and swallowed medicinally, is credited with many miraculous cures!



CITY OF FOO-CHOW.
LOOKING TOWARDS THE ARSENAL AND MOUNT KUSHAN.

CHAPTER IX.

IN FOO-CHOW CITY.

Within the walled city of Foo-Chow—Street life—Fire-walls—Woo-Shih-Shan and other hills—The two American missions—Temple of Confucius—Taouist temples—Soapstone figures—Foo-Chow lacquer—Kingfishers' feathers.

U.S. Consulate, *March 19th.*

We started early this morning by tryst to spend the day with Mr and Mrs C. C. Baldwin, the veteran missionaries of the American Presbyterian Church. They live in the heart of the walled city, so this was an excellent opportunity for seeing "the Happy City," *alias* "the Banyan City"—for I am told that Foo-Chow bears both these meanings, and perhaps the last is the most appropriate, on account of the numerous trees which have contrived to secure crevices in the rocks and walls, there to grow and flourish.

Really it seemed like the sudden change from humdrum daily life into some strange, bewildering dream to pass from these very peaceful green hills down to the busy life on both shores of the river (for there is a large Chinese population on the low ground of this island). Then crossing the Bridge of Ten Thousand Ages, with a pause to admire the river, the odd gaily coloured junks, the picturesque town to right and left, and the beautiful blue mountains, we sped onward through the busy bustling blue crowd, which, however, always most politely made way for our chairs. I may mention that, contrary to all custom, which assumes that women must wish to be secluded from public gaze, I always insist on having an uncovered chair, so as to see all round, so far as one pair of eyes can manage it. Most foreign ladies accept the dull dignity of closed sedan-chairs.

We halted at one of the booths on the great bridge, that I might invest in a number of highly ornamental china bowls for tobacco-pipes. They are globular, and fit on to reeds about three feet long, which can be used as walking-sticks when not required for smoking, the bowl being movable. These are used by poor people for smoking coarse tobacco grown by themselves. Others use pipes of white metal, with a very small bowl. Wealthy folk smoke highly scented powdered tobacco in water-pipes, also with a big bowl.

On the farther side of the river our route lay along a densely crowded street, three miles in length, ere we reached the gate by which we were to enter the city. Though certainly not "A Street of Fragrant Breezes," it was all full of interest—such quaint groups assembled round the portable stoves and clay ovens, such eager Chinamen gambling for red eggs, such gorgeous scarlet-and-gold street signs and attractive shops all open to the street, such strange objects for use in the temples, or for burning in honour of the dead.

We passed beneath one or two of those strangely ornamental structures which commemorate good citizens, and also beneath the arched gateways of strong walls, supposed to be fireproof, or at all events intended to divide the city into separate fire sections. These gateways across the crowded street are always ornamental, with a good deal of gay colour and several tiers of curly roofs.

At last we found ourselves at the great gateway of the city—that is to say, it is one of seven gateways lying on the four sides of the city. Like the walls, these great buildings are of brick on a foundation of granite. The walls themselves are about 30 feet high, and 12 feet wide on the summit, and their circuit is nearly eight miles.

Within this compass dwells a population of about 600,000 persons, crowded together in dirty narrow streets, while a good deal of the space is occupied by very picturesque rocky hills, on which are clustered temples and pagodas, shaded by banyan-trees. One of these hills is Wu-Shih-Shan, *alias* U-Shio-Sang, "the hill of the Black Stone." Here, on an excellent airy situation, overlooking the densely peopled city, are clustered the buildings of the Church Mission Society, the most prominent of which—the Theological College—is now, alas! a picture of desolation and ruin, having been deliberately burnt in a riot got up a few months ago by the *literati*, whose influence is always anti-foreign, and especially anti-Christian.

On the same hill, shaded by fine trees, stands a picturesque old temple, which has for many years been "the town-house" of the British Consul. There is a British Consulate on the foreign settlement, but this is a more attractive home, and secures a right of residence in the city.

On another pleasant hill in the neighbourhood, near to another tall pagoda, is the American Presbyterian Mission, which was our first destination this morning, the home of the C. C. Baldwins, who, I believe, were the first to begin work at Foo-Chow. They

have stuck to their post for thirty years, many of which were apparently spent in fruitless labour, "toiling in rowing, and the wind contrary." But now, like all the other Christian workers of various denominations in this province, they have the gladness of having gathered a very large number of devoted adherents, several of whom have already proved their faith by unflinchingly enduring persecution, even to death.

I believe my other American friends, the Stephen Baldwins, who live on Nantai, represent the American Methodist Episcopal Church; but all the Christian regiments here work in happy harmony, and these two American missions have enrolled about three thousand converts. They have now many out-stations scattered over the province, where each native teacher forms a centre from which spreads a knowledge of the Christian faith. Between them they have about a hundred and fifty of such Chinese agents—zealous and earnest men; in truth, none but such would devote their lives to a service replete with danger, and which brings them only contumely, so far as this world's honour is concerned.

Each of these missions also has excellent and flourishing schools. The Stephen Baldwins on Nantai have a high school for boys, a theological school, a female training institution, a hospital, and a mission press. Their namesakes in the city have also kindred institutions, and personally they have facilitated the labours of all future workers in Foo-Chow by compiling a dictionary of its peculiar dialect and idioms, and by other literary work.

When we arrived Mrs Baldwin was teaching a class of wide-awake-looking boys, for whose edification she made me trace my various wanderings on the great school-map, apparently in the hope of making them realise that there *are* other countries besides China!

When the class was dismissed we started to do a little sight-seeing in the city for my benefit. Our first object was to visit the great temple dedicated to the memory of Confucius, that wearisome sage whose fossilised wisdom has petrified all original thought throughout the vast Empire ever since the sixth century before Christ. What he said and what he taught has from that time to the present been accepted as the sole rule of perfection, making all progress impossible, and all life one long retrogression.

Confucius, as we commonly write the name, is only a Latinised form of Koong-foo-tsze, whose temples are reverenced in every city of the Empire, and whose symbol is hung up in every schoolroom, that all the scholars may prostrate themselves before it every

morning ere commencing the study of his writings, which are the foundation of all education, and on which the whole system of government is based.

On reaching the temple we found it closed, but were taken in by a circuitous way through tumble-down rooms and courts, finally reaching the temple itself, which is a fine old building and in good repair, but, like all Confucian temples, chillingly bare and cold and solemn. They are, in fact, simply ancestral halls consecrated to the dead, and even the presence of an image of Confucius himself is an exceptional and quite a modern innovation, and one which is very distasteful to his strict followers.

This temple, being truly orthodox, contains simply his memorial tablet, and those of the seventy-two most eminent of his three thousand disciples. The said tablets are simply the invariable tall, narrow, flat strips of wood, rounded at the top, supported by a stand of handsomely carved wood, and inscribed with the name of the dead. That of "the most holy ancient sage" of course occupies the central place, and is inscribed as the "Seat of the soul of the most renowned teacher of antiquity." Those of the seventy-two most eminent disciples are ranged on either side of their great master, each in his appointed order—the first holding the place of honour on the left hand, the second on the right, the third on the left, and so on; while tablets to minor sages are ranged round the walls.

In addition to these pre-Christian sages, there are tablets to many more modern individuals who have been distinguished either for filial piety, or loyalty in official capacities, or public beneficence, but chiefly for remarkable learning (of course in the wisdom of Confucius). Special honour is also paid to women of distinguished virtue or filial piety. Their tablets are placed together in a separate hall, and incense is burnt before each.

Here everything is so chilling that even the great incense-burner, candlesticks, and vases are of solid granite, on a granite altar, and ponderous pillars of granite support the heavy roof. The worshippers who daily do homage to the sage prostrate themselves in mute veneration, no words of prayer or definite expression of thought being required save on special occasions. There are fortnightly services in the temple, but those of chief interest occur in the middle of spring and of autumn, when solemn services are held here at dead of night, or rather towards the eerie hour of about 3 A.M., when all the mandarins, the civil and military officials of the city, and the literary classes assemble to do homage

to the learned dead. All wear their official dress and hat, for, like the Jews, they deem it reverent to cover the head during any act of worship. (Even in social life a gentleman calling on any person to whom honour is due must keep his hat on until politely urged to remove it—an invitation which an ignorant foreigner might naturally be afraid to hazard!) As only the Viceroy and the Tartar General (civil and military representatives of the Emperor) may approach the shrine, all the congregation remain in the outer court, which is lighted by blazing torches wrapped in scarlet cloth, and placed on high poles—the civil mandarins are placed on the left side, which is the most honourable, and the military mandarins on the right.

For this same reason the Viceroy approaches the shrine by the steps on the left-hand side, and takes his place to the left of the altar, and the Tartar General (who takes a secondary position in the worship) ascends by the right-hand steps, and takes up his position to the right of the altar. Only the Emperor in person may approach the Confucian shrine direct by the central steps.

All these gentlemen are supposed to have fasted for two days previously, so they are fully prepared to do justice to the funeral banquet which follows. At these great festivals the offering laid before the altar includes every available animal commonly used for food—*i.e.*, a whole cow or bullock, several pigs, goats, sheep, fowls, ducks, &c. These creatures are driven to the temple on the previous day, escorted by a State official; also by musicians and men bearing strange banners with suitable inscriptions (in those quaint Chinese characters which are so much more decorative in a procession than any flag with plain English words!)

These animals are made to pass before the altar, while incense is duly offered; they then pass on to the slaughter-house, where each is carefully shaved and scraped till it is as hairless as a Chinaman's face. The hair, wool, and blood are all buried, and the carcasses are laid in order before the altar, which is brilliantly illuminated.

The other offerings include 3 kinds of wine, 3 sorts of fruit, 3 varieties of flowers, and 9 different materials manufactured from silk, all of which must be white, marking the funereal character of the sacrifice. The Chinese reverence for certain symbolic numbers is here apparent in the prevalence of multiples of 3 and 9. To begin with, the invariable approach to a Confucian temple is through a triple gateway; 36 acolytes in four groups of 9 (each bearing a plume of Argus feathers) wait on the great official who,

representing the Emperor, officiates as priest. These lads must be sons of men who have taken the literary degree answering to our B.A., and are dressed in its peculiar blue silk tunic, richly embroidered tippet, and strangely decorated hat.

As a preliminary to the service, the Imperial representative must wash his hands ceremonially and offer incense—"the fragrance of an hour," as the incense-stick is called—elevating it high above his head ere it is deposited in the great incense-burner. In the course of the ceremonial he must go up to the altar 9 times, presenting different offerings, each of which he elevates above his head before presenting it. On each of these 9 occasions he performs the Kow-tow, prostrating himself three times, and knocking his head on the ground 9 times. His example is followed by all the company, who kneel each on his appointed square of the stone pavement in the outer court.

How their heads must ache before the close of this very apoplectic devotional exercise!

The company of musicians (numbering, I think, 8 times 9) are robed in ancient academic dress—long blue robes edged with black. Many carry instruments of music supposed to date from the Confucian era! There are divers stringed instruments and wind instruments, and very ancient bells, suspended from a wooden beam, and huge drums. But as these Confucian "fifes, sackbuts, and dulcimers" are now obsolete, and no one knows how to play them, the musicians merely feign to touch them, and are content with striking the bells and the great drums at intervals between their shrill vocal anthems. These, however, are accompanied by a full orchestra of all manner of dreadful modern instruments.

As a matter of course, the Chinese trace back their knowledge of music to a remote antiquity. They maintain that they discovered the division of the octave into twelve semitones B.C. 3000, and that these were accurately rendered upon twelve bamboo tubes. Under the patronage of the Emperor Huangti, B.C. 2700, music rose to such importance that the office of music-master to the Imperial family was deemed the highest in the realm.

Music enjoys the privilege of having been highly commended by the great sage himself, who pronounced it to be the best medium for governing the passions of mankind. It is to be feared, however, that we poor moderns cannot be soothed by the identical melodies which calmed the Confucian contemporaries, and which the Chinese assert to have been eminently sweet and harmonious, though how they know anything about it is hard to tell, as in B.C.

246 an iconoclastic Emperor, Tsin-Shih-Huangti, ordered the destruction of all books, music-books, and musical instruments, so that the Chinese music of the present day must date from a subsequent period.

A letter addressed to Confucius, and written on yellow paper, is presented by the Viceroy, who prostrates himself before the altar, while a herald reads the letter aloud amid the most death-like silence. He then lays it on the altar, whence, at the close of the service, the same official reverently raises it in both hands high above his head, and carries it to the sacred brazier in the outer court, and therein consigns it to the flames, which are the sole authorised medium for transmitting messages from the living to those in the world of spirits.

Offerings of cakes and of wine in ancient brazen vessels are then presented and laid upon the altar.

I have already noted that on these occasions all the *literati* are supposed to be present, for even the most advanced thinkers, who despise all the foolish ceremonial and idolatries of the Buddhist and Taouist religions, profess the deepest veneration for the wisdom of Confucius; so they condescend to eat their share of the offerings as at a funeral feast; and, in truth, the reverence accorded to Confucius is simply a development of the ancestral worship which was the aboriginal religion of the land, and is the one real religion of China at the present day—the one all-pervading influence acknowledged by all, to whatever other religious body they may nominally belong.

His teaching concerned man's moral duty to his neighbour in the practice of politeness, benevolence, and wisdom—but as for his relation to the spiritual world, that was a subject on which he abstained from comment. Consequently his followers, finding no instructions on the worship of any god, consider that none is essential, and so the pure Confucian is a true Agnostic. The majority, however, combine reverence for his teaching with a nominal adherence to that of either Buddha or Laou-tsoo. The latter was the contemporary of Confucius, but more imaginative, and his system has developed into the Taouist, whose temples and hideous idols we see in all directions.

I confess that the said temples, with all their extraordinary images and wealth of colour, have for me a fascination which is wholly lacking in the severely solemn temples of this excellent moral teacher. These hold much the same relation to other temples of China as the bare Shinto temples of Japan do to its gorgeous

Buddhist shrines. They may appeal to the intellect, but certainly not to the artistic eye.

We wandered on from one temple to another, some picturesquely niched among grey rock boulders, and some in the crowded city, till I had a bewildering general impression of endless stone-paved court-yards, wherein strange buildings, consisting of eccentric roofs supported by one wall, and many elaborately sculptured dragon-pillars, are guarded by gruesome great beasts, carved in marble or cast in bronze, and approached by fantastic bridges and sculptured stairs; while legions of fascinating china figures (representing whole legends of mythology) cluster, thick as locusts, all over intricate tiled roofs, all turned up at the corners, and ending off with elaborate arabesques, as if infected by the frolicsome dolphins and curly dragons of bright green crockery which disport themselves on the ridge-pole—their bright glare reflecting the sunlight, and the whole gaining brilliancy from the background of clear blue sky.

As to the interiors, it is useless to attempt to describe them, for though the eye detects endless variety, to the ear there must be a wearisome sameness in the oft-told tale of strange images and their votaries—images colossal or dwarf, gaudy or sombre, painted or gilded—shaven priests in grey or yellow robes—hirsute priests in satin vestments of dazzling colour, braziers, incense, votive tablets, coloured and silk-fringed lamps, gorgeous canopies and huge umbrellas, and all the thousand other items which to me are a source of such never-ending interest. When satiated with temples, there still remained the interest of the fascinating little shops.

The special industries of Foo-Chow are the quaintest little fat figures carved in soapstone, and a very beautiful sort of lacquer of which the manufacture is a secret known only to one family here, and most jealously guarded. It is smooth as satin, and the colours used are chiefly dull red and olive green. Beautiful large boxes are made of it, and table ornaments. Of these, one of the most fascinating designs is a lotus blossom resting on its own beautifully modelled leaves. Being a secret, and therefore a monopoly, each piece produced commands a high price, immensely in excess of that of other beautiful lacquers generally accounted precious.

But of all fascinating manufactures none is more attractive than the dainty and dazzling jewellery made of the exquisite metallic feathers of the blue and green kingfisher and blue jay, so worked into a setting of silver or gold as to resemble most beautiful enamel, yet with a silk-like gloss most puzzling on first inspection. This is the favourite style of jewellery here, and while great ladies wear

it in the form of artificial butterflies, flowers, and leaves of the most refined work, very effective ornaments are made for their humbler sisters on a groundwork of base metal. As to the gorgeousness of theatrical decorations thus produced, words fail to describe it—such crowns and such splendid head-dresses of all sorts!

They are beautiful, but it is quite grievous to think of the wholesale slaughter of these lovely birds involved by such a demand, and extending over so enormous a district, for it is not here only that these lovely feathers are so highly prized. I saw an immense deal of the same sort of work at Canton, not in the form of such delicately inlaid jewellery as that made here, but for the very showy marriage-crowns, which are generally made of imitation gold. This is, however, merely the foundation on which to pile artificial flowers and other ornaments made of these lovely feathers, though considerably vulgarised by the free admixture of imitation pearls.

The gilded sedan-chair in which the bride is carried is also richly decorated with a multitude of tiny wooden figures apparently enamelled, but really covered with morsels of these feathers. Fortunately it is not incumbent on a young couple to invest in one of these gorgeous crowns and chairs, as they are hired for the occasion. At Canton I also saw most exquisite hand-screens and large folding-screens, in which the feathers were applied to produce very effective designs (sometimes whole landscapes) on a golden background. Multitudes of quaint wooden figures, which appear at certain festivals in honour of the great Dragon, are also so closely coated with this glossy feather as to resemble fine porcelain.

The process of manufacture involves most delicate manipulation. Suppose a head-dress is to be made on a silver-gilt ground. The general pattern is marked out by strips of fine silver-gilt wire, which are soldered to the groundwork. The working jeweller sits at a table on which are arranged his tools and materials. These consist of strips of bright plume cut away from the rib, and neatly laid on a sheet of paper; beside them lie several small very sharp chisels. On a tiny charcoal brazier stands a cup of strong glue dissolved in spirit, and beside it lie some very fine paint-brushes. Holding the ornament in his left hand, with his right he dexterously cuts an atom of feather just the right size and shape for some piece of his pattern. Then, with a fine brush, he applies the glue to the metal, and thereon with the same brush lifts and deposits the morsel of feather, which he presses home with a

smooth horn needle. From long practice, he works with a rapidity and dexterity wonderful to behold, and, moreover, is apparently quite undisturbed by the presence of admiring spectators, who are not shut out by any window, for every shop is open to the street, and you can watch all processes of manufacture ere buying your goods!

I was so fascinated in watching one of these patient neat-handed jewellers making a gorgeous bridal head-dress that I could hardly tear myself away. But the lowering sun warned me not to delay too long, for at 6.30 P.M. sharp, after some minutes of preliminary shouting and measured gong-beating, the gates of the city are closed, and the keys are sent to a head official, after which neither ingress nor egress is possible. So it is necessary ere then to be on whichever side of the wall you wish to sleep!

CHAPTER X.

FEMALE INFANTICIDE.

Foundling Hospital—A young wife—Paying mothers to nurse their own children—The Sunday difficulty—Commencement of the mission in Foo-Chow—The Term Question—The Rev. Wong Kiu-taik—Sorely-tried converts—Steady increase—Census of foreign missionaries.

AMONGST the native charities which we have visited is a Foundling Hospital, where unwelcome infants (chiefly girls) who have been abandoned by their unnatural mothers are carried, should they be found alive, and sometimes they are brought here and handed in anonymously by their own mothers. So far from being deemed a crime, infanticide is not even blamed by public opinion, nevertheless foreign influence has so far modified the views of the upper classes that various semi-official proclamations have been issued strongly condemning the practice, and pointing out that, as the destruction of girls must be displeasing to the gods, it must tend to defeat the object in view—namely, obtaining the Heaven-granted gift of sons to perform the rites of ancestral sacrifice and worship.

The Foundling Hospitals are built on the same plan as the others —rows of mean, dirty, damp cells, where, without a pretence to cleanliness or comfort, wretchedly poor women are established as

wet-nurses on a monthly wage of about four shillings, with a trifling additional allowance for getting the baby's head shaved! Each receives charge of a couple of the poor starved babies—some indeed are expected to take charge of three; and although such are allowed a dole of flour and water, to supplement the deficient supply of nourishment, it is needless to say that the miserable children are horribly neglected, and the sound of their ceaseless pitiful wailing is heard even before we enter this abode of infant misery. Oh! what a contrast to the happy and well-beloved babies of Japan.

Here the death-rate is of course enormous, and about a coolie-load per diem of dead babies is carried out of the hospital to receive uncoffined and unrecognised burial. Never was there a more practical illustration of the survival of the fittest! Such babies as survive ten months of this treatment acquire a definite value, like puppies which have had distemper, and they are purchased by childless couples who want to rear a servant to tend their old age, or else by provident parents who thus cheaply provide secondary wives for their sons—at least such are the ostensible reasons assigned to make the purchase legitimate. Even supernumerary sons are occasionally consigned to this hospital, whence they are probably removed by sonless couples who want to adopt an heir to offer sacrifice after their death. As to the doubly rejected children who have no promise of future beauty and whom no one wants, they are generally diseased, deformed, idiotic, or blind, and so are eventually sent forth to swell the ranks of wretched street-beggars.

There is little fear that the girls who are thus purchased as future daughters-in-law will turn out unsatisfactory, as they are too much in dread of the alternative—namely, being reduced to the rank of servants, who are virtually slaves. But child-wives are sometimes provided just as cheaply by direct purchase from the parents, or by exchange. The other day, a lady was visiting a tiny Christian school in a village near here; she was particularly attracted by a bright little fellow, about eight years of age, who for some months had refused to worship the village idols, and who repeated various Christian hymns with much feeling.

The little chap carried in his arms a wee baby girl, and the lady naturally asked if it was his sister, whereupon he looked shy, and did not answer, but his brother volunteered the information, "She is his wife!" On further inquiry as to why so young a baby had been taken from its own mother, the boy's mother explained that

had she purchased an older child, she would have required to pay a higher price, whereas, having a girl of her own of the same age, she had exchanged with a neighbour, who also had a son to marry, but as this baby was larger and fatter than her own, she had thrown in a dollar and some cakes to equalise the exchange!

I am told that the proportion of female infanticide varies greatly in different provinces. Throughout the province of Fuh-Kien it is unusually high; in fact, there are some districts in the neighbourhood of Amoy where 30 per cent of all the girls born are put to death—strangled, or else drowned like so many puppies. Here in Foo-Chow, it is quite a common thing for a mother to mention that she has made away with three or four girls! But I am told that throughout the empire the numerical disparity of female children is always a painfully suggestive characteristic. Chinese students of Bible history find it almost impossible to accept the first chapter of Exodus as an accurate translation. It seems to them so preposterous to assert that Pharaoh could have commanded that the boys should all be drowned, and the girls saved alive!

One simple detail will illustrate the different estimate in which sons and daughters are held, even in families which have no wish to destroy the latter. In certain districts of Northern China (and probably elsewhere), the medical charge for vaccinating a boy is 800 cash, which is equal to about ninepence. The charge for vaccinating a girl is only 400 cash, as it is found that the people would rather run the risk of their daughter's beauty being destroyed, than pay for her at the same rate as for a son!

Probably, however, a more remarkable proof is one which has just come under my notice in this town. Prominent among the Chinamen who are truly friendly to foreigners is Mr Ahok, a merchant who, having begun life with little of the world's gear, has prospered so greatly that he now owns large stores all over the city. His history reminds me of the biography of "A Successful Merchant" in London town, for, like him, he has ever made a rule of most liberal almsgiving, increasing in proportion to the increase of his business, and truly it seems that a blessing has rested on all he has taken in hand.

Though not by birth of high estate, he has been created a mandarin in recognition of his many and far-reaching good deeds, one of which has been the salvage of innumerable girl-babies by the simple announcement that he would give an allowance of rice for a certain time to every mother who, purposing to destroy her unwelcome female infant, would abstain from so doing. It is found

that when a woman has taken the trouble of rearing her babe through its early stages of existence, she grows fond of it, and rarely destroys it wilfully. The number of Mr Ahok's pensioners varies considerably in years of plenty or years of famine. During the recent bad years he has actually allowed rice to five hundred mothers to induce them to spare the lives of the innocents! Last year, I am told, the number was reduced to three hundred, but this number is now steadily increasing. Of course it is only the poorest of the people whom he can reach by this means. As regards the well-to-do parents, who simply cannot be bothered rearing useless girls, who can never repay the cost of their keep, the only chance of influencing them is by means of a little body of native reformers who are now endeavouring to create a healthy public opinion on the subject. Of course the spread of Christianity is the only effectual safeguard—the only real antidote for a custom so widely established, and which, apart from its own iniquity, is held responsible for much of the immorality of this land.

As regards Mr Ahok's good work, it is virtually the act of a Christian, for, although he has not yet formally been admitted to their number, he has long been a regular attendant at the services of the American Mission, and never fails, by every means in his power, to help and honour all persons connected with Christian missions, which is a good deal more than can be said for many foreigners who, by virtue of their nationality, rank as unquestioned Christians.

The difficulty in Mr Ahok's case is not merely the usual question of the barbarous cruelty and personal danger of abstaining from the accustomed offerings on behalf of the dead, which is a far more real test than most Europeans could believe, but also the injustice which he may do to others by a total cessation from all Sunday trade, which is always insisted upon as an absolutely necessary preliminary to Christian baptism.[1]

[1] This question proved a matter for long and most anxious consideration. Although for a while these apparently insuperable difficulties seemed to necessitate the continuance of Sunday work, Mr Ahok made his house and his great stores centres for Christian meetings on certain days of every week and month, and at length the very natural objections of his partners were so far overcome that it was decided to close all places of business on Sunday—not suddenly, but after due notice, and the issue to all old customers of an almanack to show on what days of the Chinese year the Sundays would fall, and an intimation that on those days no business could be transacted. Mr Ahok further resolved that all persons engaged in his service should receive their full seven days' wages, but made it a condition of remaining in his employment, that in place of serving him at their usual posts on the seventh day, they should all be present at a Christian meeting, and might

He has in his employment fully a thousand heathen Chinamen, to all of whom a compulsory day of idleness would be a serious loss, especially as many have wives and children. But to engage to pay them wages for no work, by the same act which knocks off the profit of one day in seven, would be indeed a serious sacrifice, especially as it is one which is not made by even foreign merchants (foreign, hence at least nominal Christians), and which of course would thus place him and his Chinese partners at a terrible disadvantage among their competitors.

I do not mean by this to imply that foreigners' shops or mercantile houses are actually open on Sunday, but throughout the East an immense amount of business is transacted on the day of nominal rest. Not only do the heavy requirements of "mail-day" oppress the principals, but gangs of weary workers pour out from the tea-hongs and other factories on every day alike, the argument of the employers being that which I have already stated, namely, that the observance of a compulsory holiday would be anything but a privilege to those to whom it is no holy day. Therefore it is simply a question of how far the employment of "the stranger that is within thy gates" is legitimate.

Of course the native convert in India, China, or Japan, notes with wonder that the Sabbatical observance which is made an indispensable condition of his admission to the Church, sits very lightly on those already within its pale.

This little province of Fuh-Kien, although about the smallest of the eighteen provinces of China Proper (being only just about the size of England, and with a population of only twenty millions, out of the total of four hundred millions), is nevertheless one of the most interesting centres of mission work in the Empire.

Nowhere has good seed been sown in ground apparently more barren than this, which for many years proved so terribly discouraging to the few earnest men who first attempted to kindle one ray of Christian light in the dense darkness of a land so wholly given to idolatry.

The first effort was made by Americans in 1846—*i.e.*, two years thus have full opportunity of learning the tenets of the faith he had himself adopted.

It is much to be regretted that this great test-experiment should have been tried at a season of such grievous commercial depression, that the results so far have not commended the movement to the non-Christian partners.

On a smaller scale, the strict observance of the Sabbath by individual converts in various parts of the country, and especially the extraordinary fact of abstinence from money-making work, has so astonished their neighbours as to attract great attention and provoke inquiry, which has resulted in numerous conversions.

after the port of Foo-Chow was opened to foreign trade. They were followed in 1850 by two clergymen of the English Church Missionary Society, one of whom was skilled in medicine, an agency whose value had already been proved at Amoy, in this same province. Hitherto the Americans had only been suffered to live at the suburb of Nantai. It was therefore deemed a great concession when quarters were assigned to the medical Britons in an old temple on the Wu-Shih-Shan hill, in the heart of the walled city.

Within two years, one of the clergymen was removed to another district, as if a parish of 600,000 souls was not a large enough sphere for two men. But THERE lies the great difficulty of mission work in China—the problem of how one man is to teach one million. This is not a figure of speech—it is the actual proportion of the total number of Protestant missionaries sent out by upwards of thirty different societies, to work among the 400,000,000[1] of China.

For three years Mr Welton toiled alone, acquiring great personal influence by his ministrations among the sick poor, about three thousand cases annually seeking his healing skill, and during all this time he ceaselessly strove to make known to them the love of the Great Physician. At length two other clergymen were sent to his aid, but his own health had broken down through overwork, and he only returned home to die.

The two new-comers had scarcely mastered the difficulties of the language ere one died of fever (having previously buried his wife), and the other was compelled by the illness of his wife to leave so isolated a post. Thus a fifth clergyman, the Rev. G. Smith, who had in the meantime arrived, and was still in the first agonies of battling with the language, was left utterly alone; and if any man or woman in Europe imagines that he or she has realised the pain of loneliness, just let them imagine what it would be to be ALONE among millions of contemptuous idolaters, not one of

[1] It is supposed that this was a fair estimate of the population thirty years ago, but since then many causes have tended greatly to thin these legions—floods, famines, pestilences, and the frightful prolonged civil war, besides the rapid increase of excessive opium-smoking, which tells so fatally both on the number and the vitality of the smoker's children. After the great famine, the London Relief Committee, sanctioned by Sir Thomas Wade, British ambassador at Peking, accepted the estimate of 320,000,000. But in order to keep thoroughly within the mark, the Rev. J. Hudson Taylor bases all his calculations on the assumption that the population of China Proper has dwindled to 227,000,000, while Manchuria, Mongolia, Sungaria, and Thibet furnish about 33,000,000 more, making a total of 250,000,000. See the wonderfully forcible details in 'China's Spiritual Need and Claims,' by the Rev. J. Hudson Taylor, published by Messrs Morgan & Scott.

whom had one grain of sympathy for the foreign barbarian who could not even make himself understood!

This was the state of the C.M.S. Mission here at the end of its tenth year. Not one convert, or the smallest prospect of one, had rewarded this effort, which had cost three valuable lives, besides invaliding others. It now became a serious question whether it might not be wiser to commence operations elsewhere. Mr Smith, however, pleaded hard to be allowed to remain in Foo-Chow, as there were three inquirers whom he deemed hopeful. It was a faint spark to result from such prolonged effort, but his petition was granted, and he was left to fan this feeble germ of life. In the course of the following year he had the satisfaction of baptising four converts; within the next two years this number was increased to thirteen. But he was only destined to see the commencement of the harvest, and then he too was called to his rest.

Ere his death, in 1863, he was joined by the Rev. J. R. Wolfe, who thus, within a year of his arrival, was left in sole charge of the Mission. Within two months, he likewise was brought to the verge of the grave, and had to retire to Hong-Kong for medical aid. Thus the infant Church was left without any foreign pastor. Happily in this extremity, a Chinese catechist, by name Wong Kiu-taik, was found competent to act as evangelist of the native Church, and thenceforth hundreds of his countrymen daily attended his preaching at two chapels in different parts of the crowded city. He was subsequently admitted to holy orders by Bishop Alford, and has proved a most earnest and able clergyman—the first Chinese pastor of Fuh-Kien.

His own simple story is most touching. He was a young landscape-painter, and was persuaded by his special friend (also a young artist) to attend the services of the American Episcopal Mission. What he there heard convinced him that the foreign religion was true. The despair and indignation of his mother, when she realised his conversion, were unbounded. She drove him from the house with the most terrible of Chinese curses, forbidding his presence at her funeral. But though sorely troubled, the young man's constancy was nowise shaken; on the contrary, he only became the more earnest and zealous.

One day he received a message from his mother commanding him to come to her. He fully expected to find some plot for his destruction, and obeyed her behest with many an anxious prayer. She asked him if he was still determined to be a Christian, and it needed all his courage to reply that such was indeed the case.

Judge of his thankful joy when she replied that if that was really his determination she would no longer oppose him, but he might live at home and be a Christian. He was baptised soon afterwards, at the age of twenty-three, assuming the name of Kiu-taik, "Seeker of Virtue."

For a while he worked as an evangelist in the service of the American Mission, but resigned his post in consequence of a difficulty which has sorely troubled the Christians of China—a difficulty known as "The Term Question," which is, in fact, a very painful dispute as to the Chinese word to be adopted as the best equivalent for the name of GOD. The decision of the American Mission was in favour of a term which Wong could not conscientiously use, as to his mind it conveyed an idolatrous meaning. He therefore left the Americans, and with their fullest recommendation joined the English Mission, in which he has done such good service.

The "Term Question" has been the source of much painful discussion among all sections of the Christian Church, and is one on which the ablest men and best of friends have carried on hot contentions, most unedifying to the Chinese whom they desire to instruct. The controversy, which has raged on the claims of three Chinese titles, has given birth to a dozen learned pamphlets. The first is SHANG-TI, "The Supreme God;" the second is T'IEN-CHOO, "The Lord of Heaven;" the third is SHIN, "Spirit."

The first of these terms appears the most rational, but its opponents say that the Chinese will naturally identify it with the Supreme Being whom they worship in the Temple of Heaven, and perhaps in so doing they might not be far wrong.[1] But the result of the dispute is that the first term is in use throughout the Fuh-Kien and Hang-Chow Missions, and is also used by the missionaries in Hong-Kong, though both in his preaching and in his translation of the Bible and Prayer-book, their bishop (Bishop Burdon) adheres to the term T'ien-Choo, which is that adopted by the Church of Rome. On the other hand, the term Shin is that sanctioned by Bishop Russell, and generally used in the Ningpo district and at Shanghai, as also by the American missionaries. Consequently the travelled Chinaman has a general impression that three sets of foreign teachers are advocating the worship of three Gods!

This then was the question which gave to the Church of England in Foo-Chow her first ordained native clergyman, and, as I have said, his earnest preaching has led many of his countrymen to adopt the faith which he so powerfully advocates.

[1] "WHOM therefore ye ignorantly worship, HIM declare I unto you."

In the following year, some undefined cause aroused the fury of the mob against Christians in general, and a savage persecution ensued, in which chapel, schools, mission library, and teachers' houses were destroyed, and many of the converts were cruelly maltreated. Then, as in a multitude of more recent cases, the Chinese Christians gave proof of an intense reality of faith, ready to endure the loss of all things, even unto death.

I often wish, when I hear men lightly quoting from one another the stock phrases which are accepted as conclusive evidence of the uselessness of mission work, and of the hypocrisy which it is supposed to foster in its converts (all of whom are supposed to be merely nominal, or attracted by gain), that the speakers would just take the trouble to inquire for themselves as to the truth of their statements. They would learn a very different story from the lips of men who really know what they are speaking about, and who would gladly give them a thousand details of individuals who have proved the intensity of their convictions by voluntarily resigning lucrative posts in connection with idol worship, or involving Sunday work; by enduring bitter persecutions from their own nearest and dearest relations, deliberately giving up all ease and comfort in life, and accepting a lot of assured poverty and suffering, all in the one great effort to live worthy of the Light and Love which has filled their hearts—a Light which in many cases has long been steadily and bitterly resisted, ere it has thus triumphed.

In the case of this first general persecution at Foo-Chow, it led to the usual result of calling much attention to the new doctrine, and greatly enlarging the number of genuine inquirers, from which, one by one, arose individuals desiring baptism. Several European merchants were so much impressed by the constancy of these native Christians under such serious persecution, that they subscribed £1000 to build a church for their use in the heart of the city. This was opened in 1865, the bell which summoned the congregation to worship being that rescued from the forecastle of H.M.S. Childers, which had recently been wrecked on this coast.

It has been said by one of England's greatest preachers, that "The faith which does not seek to communicate itself to others, soon shrivels up." Here we find the converse most practically illustrated, for the most remarkable feature of the growth of this native Church has been that, notwithstanding the persecution which such a course is almost certain to awaken, each man or woman who has grasped some idea of Christian truth invariably tries to convince friends and neighbours, so that all over the country individ-

uals are doing evangelists' work on their own account, and thus a multitude of tiny Christian centres are formed whence the light is certain ere long to radiate further and further.

As an example of how much one earnest man may effect, and also of how good seed lying fallow for years may yet come to light, Mr S. L. Baldwin tells of one of his converts here, by name Ching-Ting, a devoted Christian, who went about from village to village preaching the Gospel. At various places he was stoned, and finally was arrested and thrown into the common prison on some totally false charge, for which, nevertheless, he was condemned to receive seven hundred lashes with a triple leather thong, making the punishment equal to over two thousand cuts. Being so lacerated as to be incapable of walking, he was carried back to Foo-Chow, where a foreign physician stated that so severe a case of scourging had never come to his knowledge. But though in such intense agony that he could not repress his groans, he never ceased to plead with all around him to turn to the Saviour, who could give the soul such perfect peace, though the body was racked with pain.[1]

[1] Very touching is the simple confidence with which these fine frank natures accept and realise their newly found privilege of what St John (1 John i. 3) calls "our fellowship" with God. One young man, a candidate for baptism, was asked whether he felt that he truly loved the Saviour? Humbly but very earnestly came the answer: "*I do. I cling to Him; I am very, very close to Him.*" And this has been the testimony, proven by consistent lives, of thousands in China, and in many instances sealed by martyrdom.

From the south of China to the far north, all the converts, whether Catholic or Protestant, know very well that in embracing Christianity they render themselves liable to persecution in every form.

Thus at Christmas time 1879, there was a fearful persecution in a district within a hundred miles of Canton, where a wealthy Christian convert, having determined to build a church in his village, was seized and tortured, to make him forswear Christ. *On his remaining steadfast, he was bound to a cross and swathed in cotton-wool saturated with oil, and so was burnt alive.* Four of his fellow-Christians were also fearfully tortured and mutilated, and then *they likewise* (*since they could not be induced to recant*) *were tied to crosses and burnt.*

Fire and frost are alike enlisted in this cruel work. From I-cho, a village seventy miles from Peking, comes a story of prolonged torture, as the penalty for helping to commence a mission there. A friendly Chinaman negotiated the rental of a suitable house, for which a year's rent was paid in advance. But when the tenants came to take possession, they were officially informed by the mandarins that no foreigners could be allowed to live so near the Imperial Tombs, as the good influences of the place would be destroyed.

The unhappy Chinaman who had hired the house was barbarously beaten, receiving a hundred blows from a strip of bamboo three inches wide, and twenty blows on his face with an inch-wide leather. Disabled by this brutal treatment, the poor wretch was then chained to a stone platform, and there left for seventeen days without fire, in the bitter cold of a northern winter (where for months together the ice on the river is a foot in depth). His undressed wounds had putrefied, and his condition was altogether horrible, when, on payment of a heavy fine, he was released, to act as a living warning to all who should in any way countenance the foreigners. So far, however, from this result being attained, the people seem to have been im-

As soon as he was able to walk, he resumed his preaching work on the identical round where he had been so cruelly persecuted; and so greatly has his word been blessed, that ere many months had elapsed, four hundred of his countrymen looked upon him as the instrument of their conversion.

In the course of his wanderings he went to the Isle of Lamyit, and there was astonished to be greeted by friendly people, who said, "Oh, we know about this doctrine,—it is not new to us;" and then they told him that thirty years previously Mr Medhurst had come up the coast, scattering Christian books broadcast. They had received the Gospels of St Matthew and St John and other books, and had studied them, always hoping that some one would come and tell them more. So about sixty persons were quite prepared to become Christians.

As another instance of the spread of Christianity by purely native agency, I may quote that in the neighbourhood of Lo-Nguong (a town immediately to the north of Foo-Chow, where a great awakening commenced some years ago), on the very first occasion that an English clergyman, the Rev. T. R. Wolfe, visited one of the neighbouring villages, he was invited to a native house, where, in the great hall, usually devoted to idols, he found that these had been banished, and replaced by tables on which lay Chinese copies of the Bible and the Prayer-book. He learnt that the whole family were in the habit of assembling here regularly for morning and evening prayer, which was conducted by the elder brother. Within a radius of nine miles from the central town there were ninety candidates for baptism, besides a great number of inquirers, and at the village aforesaid about one hundred persons had assembled, bringing their own rice, that they might be able to remain all day.

As a matter of course, such a movement was quickly followed by an outbreak of violent persecution, in which the Christians suffered terribly; but nevertheless, almost without exception they stood firm, and quite recently small congregations have come into existence at new villages in the neighbourhood. To one of these (the village of Iong-Tung) the Gospel was brought by one villager who had happened to attend a preaching in the village of A-chaia. He at once told all he had heard to his own neighbours, and very soon himself embraced the faith. His neighbours one and all joined together against him in cruel persecution, but he continued

pressed by the injustice of the case, and, so far as they dared, proved friendly and respectful.

faithful unto death. No sooner was he dead than the head-man of the village, who had been the leader of the opposition, became convinced that his persecuted neighbour was right, and so, putting away idols, he opened his reception-hall for Christian worship.

This exasperated his people, who proceeded to destroy his tea plantations, attacked his house, and drove him and his family from the village. After a while, however, their minds were changed towards him. He was invited to return, and his most violent antagonists were among the first members of a now flourishing congregation.

Another village in the same group has furnished a most remarkable parallel to the story of the Philippian jailer of A.D. 53. In place of Paul and Silas at Philippi, we have two Chinese converts at Lau-Iong. They were imprisoned on charges which the mandarins themselves admitted to be false, but were detained in consequence of bribes from the anti-Christian party. But such was their influence for good, that first the jailer himself and then a fellow-prisoner openly declared themselves Christians, and soon after were admitted to baptism. The two prisoners were placed in offices of trust in the jail, and were allowed to hold Christian services every Sunday, for the benefit of their miserable fellow-prisoners, so there is good reason to hope that some of these have also been influenced for good, in which case they are quite certain themselves to become light-bearers in the dark places where their lot is cast.

From Peking comes a very remarkable Chinese version of the story of Cornelius, the devout centurion. His counterpart is a respectable farmer, who, while yet a heathen, has been noted for his devotion, his liberal almsgiving to the poor, and his large offerings to the temples. Several years ago he became possessed of a copy of the New Testament, some portions of which greatly impressed him as he read them over and over by himself. At length he dreamt that a messenger from heaven had appeared to him, bidding him spend no more money on idol temples, and promising that on the 23d day of the 7th moon he would meet a man who would tell him what he ought to do.

It so happened that in the 7th moon one of the native colporteurs was sent to that district to sell Christian books. The man, who is a simple-minded earnest Christian, also had a dream, which visibly impressed him with the belief that he was being called there for special work. On the very day indicated, he met the farmer, who invited him to his house, where he tarried for

three days, expounding "the old, old story" to eager ears. I need scarcely add that the farmer believed and was baptised.

Such parallels to the conversions of apostolic days are by no means uncommon here. Another which recently occurred in the neighbourhood of Ningpo, was that of a man whose sole means of gaining his living was by fortune-telling. This man, having become convinced of the truth, earnestly desired baptism, but his profession rendered it impossible to receive him. Again and again he returned, declaring his faith and his true desire to become a Christian, but saying that he could not see his way to give up his fortune-telling, as he could find no other means of support.

This continued for some time: at length one morning when several candidates were to be baptised, they saw this man approach with a large bundle, which contained the whole of his fortune-telling gear, his books, his tablets, charms, and numbered slips of bamboo, and kindling a fire in the courtyard, he proceeded (like the sorcerers of old)[1] to burn them all in the presence of the congregation, and then, while the smoke of this burnt-sacrifice still floated heavenward, he joyfully took his place among the candidates, fully resolved to find some legitimate means of earning his daily rice.

Thus gradually does the leaven work. Now[2] the Church Missionary Society alone can reckon 5871 converts in this province of Fuh-Kien. Of these, 3106 have been admitted to baptism, and 1803 are regular communicants, and moreover, communicants to whom church-membership is no matter of course—no mere inheritance, but the result of an intense individual conviction, and one which all are aware may any day lead not only to the destruction of all their worldly property, but also to the infliction of the most barbarous personal suffering, and persecution literally to the death.

Such persecution comes not only from outsiders, for, in the words of the Master, "A man's foes are they of his own household," and many have been driven to choose between professing their adherence to Christ, and giving up father, mother, brethren, wife, and children. Many wives, hitherto dutiful and loving, have refused to remain with husbands who would not worship at the ancestral altars; and on the other hand, women have been barbarously beaten by their husbands and mothers-in-law, to make them abjure their faith in Christ.

In the few instances in which learned literary men have joined

[1] Acts xix. 19.

[2] I have given the statistics for 1884.

the Christians, they have been deprived of their much-prized and hardly earned literary degrees, which implies the sacrifice of all worldly honour, or hope of official employment; and those who have hitherto been employed as tutors or schoolmasters for sons of the wealthy gentry, know that all their pupils will be taken from them. Moreover, so far from any pecuniary gain accruing to the converts, as is often so unblushingly asserted, these people (by nature so money-grasping) become specially distinguished by the liberal and systematic efforts they make—often out of their own poverty—to contribute to church expenses, and to aid those still poorer than themselves.

The liberality of the native Christians has become proverbial among their heathen brethren. Thus in the case of one of the recent converts at Peking, who for conscience' sake had given up a lucrative post in connection with a Buddhist temple. For three years he continued in extreme penury, gaining a scanty living as a cobbler. At last, much to his surprise, and without any solicitation on his part, he was appointed paymaster to his "banner," a post which, in the hands of a Chinaman of average honesty, proves highly lucrative, owing to sundry customary perquisites squeezed off the pay of the bannermen.

When to their amazement they not only received their pay in full, without deduction, but were actually credited with a small gain on the exchange, some set him down as a fool, but others maintained that "certainly he must belong to the religion of Jesus." He had not then openly professed his faith, but such generosity was deemed conclusive evidence.

As an example of voluntary loss for Christ's sake, I may instance one man (by no means a solitary example) who had a flourishing business as a seller of opium (the accursed drug which, of their own free will, all the Christians wholly abjure). In order to become a Christian, Sing gave up his opium den, an open profession of his faith which made him fair game for the enemy. Again and again he was beaten and half killed, and robbed right and left by the servants of officials. Now he earns a scanty livelihood by selling salt and straw sandals; but, notwithstanding all his troubles, he is a happy-looking, venerable man, whose neighbours find they cannot help respecting him and his faith.

As regards the opium-selling, even the heathen would respect the man who gave that up, for of all the millions who within the last century have become victims to the use of the drug, there is not one who does not heartily abhor the weakness which first

induced him individually to touch it, and who does not bemoan that such a temptation should ever have been put in his way. *No Chinaman ever speaks in defence of it*, or as if "moderate smoking" were permissible. ALL acknowledge it to be a baneful vice, but one against which they have not strength to contend. They say "it is not the man that eats the opium, but the opium that eats the man."

There is any amount of tobacco-smoking—that they consider all right, and they have other stimulants (amongst which must be reckoned much tea), and those who choose drink bad spirits; drunkenness from this cause is, however, almost unknown. But even the native Christians, who allow tobacco-smoking in their chapels and meeting-houses during week-day meetings, all agree to the necessity of rigidly excluding any opium-smoker from Church-membership.

One thing worthy of note is, that in some cases the reason assigned for the persecution of Chinese Christians is precisely that which was urged by the Jews against the early Christians. "If we let them alone," said the Jews, "all the world will go after them." At Ku-Cheng, where within three years there were added to the Church 120 most devoted Christians, the Chinese raised a riot, and tore up the foundation of their church—for, said they, "if we let them build this house, the whole neighbourhood will embrace their vile religion." There is every reason to believe that their fears are most just, for though the Chinese nature is to oppose everything new, once the new thing has succeeded in taking root, it is generally accepted as inevitable.

Concluding Note.—Though the total number of Chinese Christians forms a very minute fraction of the total population of this vast empire, it is by no means insignificant compared with the very small band of preachers who have as yet devoted their energies to work in this gigantic field.

We must bear in mind that it is not yet seventy years since the very first missionary of the Reformed Faith set foot in China. Talk of a needle in a bundle of hay!—a needle in an overgrown haystack would be but a poor comparison for one Christian commencing work alone among these four hundred millions. It was no wonder that six years elapsed ere in 1814 Tsai Ako, the first convert, was baptised.[1]

[1] Robert Morrison, the first Protestant missionary in China, was a Scotchman, though born at Morpeth, in Northumberland. In 1807 he was sent by the London Mission to endeavour to commence a mission in China. But in those days the

For twenty-seven years Dr Robert Morrison toiled unceasingly, preparing the way for those who should follow, but during all those years only three fellow-workers came to his help. Until 1842 the actual mission work had scarcely begun. After this it became evident that the new religion was beginning to take root (a feeble plant in its infancy, but one which nevertheless may yet overshadow the whole vast empire).

By 1853 the Protestant Missions numbered 350 Chinese communicants. In 1863 these had augmented to 2000. Ten years later showed a further increase to 8000, and now 22,000 well-proven converts kneel at the Christian altar, while about 100,000 regularly attend Christian services—not as a matter of form or of habit, but from determination to learn the truth, at whatever cost.

From this number have been selected about 1100 earnest and devout men who work as catechists, and a handful of the most able and eloquent have been ordained to the ministry. Yet even these, added to the 500 foreigners now working in various parts of the Great Empire, are but as a grain of salt to a barrel of herring, as compared with the multitudes lying utterly beyond reach of their influence.

If you consider the mere size of China—that it is 104 times as large as England, 176 times as large as Scotland, 44 times the size of the United Kingdom—and then consider that Scotland alone claims the whole services of 3845 ministers, while Great Britain absorbs 35,000, each of whom finds work enough in his own sphere, it is evident that 1600 Chinese and foreign Christian teachers can only reach a very small proportion even of the people of China Proper, to say nothing of the vast outlying regions beyond.

I here subjoin a tolerably accurate numerical table of the representatives of thirty-nine Protestant missionary societies who at present form the mission-staff of China.

route to the East practically lay in the hands of the merchants forming the East India Company, by whom such difficulties had been thrown in the way of missionaries proceeding to India, that it was deemed wiser for Mr Morrison not to apply to them for a passage, but to adopt the then difficult route *viâ* America. Thus he reached Canton in 1808. Once there, the Company were glad to enlist his great linguistic talent, and he was appointed translator to their factory at Canton, and thus at their expense, at a cost of £15,000, was published his great Chinese dictionary. This, however, was not ready till 1822. He had previously published complete translations of the New and the Old Testaments. He also established an Anglo-Chinese College at Malacca for English and Chinese literature, with a view to the propagation of Christianity. He died at Canton, in 1834, but his body was carried for burial to the Christian cemetery at Macao, where also lie his wife and son. These neglected graves lie just beyond the garden where the exiled Portuguese poet Camoens composed his famous 'Lusiad,' but few who visit that garden bestow a glance on the grass-grown burial-ground.

Summary of Protestant Missions in China, December 1886.[1]

Date of Mission.	British.	Foreign Missionaries.		Native Helpers.	Adult Communicants.
		Men.	Single Women and Wives.		
1807	London Missionary Society,	24	23	74	3052
1843	British and Foreign Bible Society,	11	5	82	...
1844	Church Missionary Society,	24	23	190	2724
1845	English Baptist,	18	15	17	994
1847	English Presbyterian,	22	24	126	3312
1852	Wesleyan Missionary Society,	22	12	28	679
1860	Methodist New Connection,	7	5	54	1186
1864	Society for Promotion of Female Education,	...	7	...	...
1865	United Presbyterian (Scotland),	7	6	17	306
1865	China Inland Mission,	117	128	114	1314
1868	National Bible Society, Scotland,	3	2	40	...
1868	United Methodist Free Church,	3	3	10	297
1869	Irish Presbyterian,	3	3	...	...
1874	Society for Propagation of the Gospel,	6	3	...	...
1878	Established Church, Scotland,	3	2	3	30
1885	Friends Foreign Missionary Association,	1	...	...	...
1886	Book and Tract Society,	2	...	...	...
...	Independent Workers,	4	2	...	...
1886	Foreign Christian Missionary Society,	3	...	...	...
	American and Continental.				
1830	American Board of Foreign Missions (Congregational),	24	37	80	1175
1834	American Baptist (North),	9	14	80	1433
1835	American Protestant Episcopal,	11	12	30	384
1838	American Presbyterian (North),	44	46	30	4368
1847	Methodist Episcopal (North),	32	36	205(?)	2408
1847	Seventh-Day Baptist,	1	2	8	18
1847	American Baptist (South),	11	13	547	...
1847	Basel Mission,	19	19	53	1611
1847	Rhenish Mission,	3	3	6	60
1848	Methodist Episcopal (South),	8	15	10	146
1850	Berlin Foundling Hospital,	1	5	...	...
1858	American Reformed (Dutch),	5	7	23	784
1859	Women's Union Mission,	...	4	...	...
1868	American Presbyterian (South),	8	10	10	44
1871	Canadian Presbyterian,	2	2	...	...
1876	American Bible Society,	8	4	40	...
1882	Berlin Mission,	5	5	27	119
1884	General Protestant Evangelical Society,	2	...	...	...
1885	Bible Christians,	4	1	...	...
1886	Disciples of Christ,	3	...	...	...

[1] Chiefly taken from the table in 'China's Spiritual Need,' by the Rev. J. Hudson Taylor.

From the above table it is evidently impossible to form any accurate estimate of the progress of Christianity in China from the reports of any one missionary society. All the regiments of the Grand Army are at work, each doing their part, however feebly (and assuredly some are still strangely neglectful of this great recruiting-ground!); but one and all are surely undermining the old idolatries, and training a multitude of Soldiers of the Cross, many of whom will, in their turn, become successful recruiting-sergeants. It must also be remembered that mission influence extends far beyond the circle of actual adherents—that prejudices have been modified, and confidence won from multitudes who as yet give no sign of any personal leaning to the foreign faith.

CHAPTER XI.

A CHINESE DINNER-PARTY.

Homes—Rich and poor—The ladies—An adopted son—The place of honour—Chinese dishes—Beef prohibited—Whale in Old England—"Summer grass"—Birds'-nest soup.

U.S. CONSULATE, *March 20th.*

THE climate here at this season is wonderfully delicious—such clear pure air, and so soft and balmy. What a contrast to our British March!

This morning the bright sunshine was irresistible for sketching, so I went out with only one coolie and selected a very picturesque corner of one of the steep streets between this and the river. I found standing-room in the projecting shop of a civil young barber, who went on calmly shaving his customers, unheeding the crowd which immediately formed and pressed around. They were all perfectly civil, and deeply interested in watching the reproduction of each detail.

Returned here in time to start for a great Chinese dinner-party, which Mr Ahok most kindly gave in my honour, that I might taste all the national dishes. Having been warned that gay garments would be appreciated, we donned our most effective evening-dresses, and such jewels as we had with us, and, thus adorned, took our places in the usual wicker arm-chairs, slung on bamboos,

each carried by four strong Chinamen clothed in the invariable purplish-blue cloth, and wearing large straw hats. Mr Ahok's home is on this green isle of Nantai, and our way to it lay through the poor streets which lie along the river banks—very wretched slums, inhabited by the poorest of the working population, densely crowded, and painfully dirty and unfragrant. There seemed no end to the long narrow streets of dingy little shops; and I was beginning to wonder when we should reach the beautiful house of which I had heard so much, when suddenly our chair-bearers stopped before a gate in a dead wall in the street. We entered, and all within was like a scene in some other world! Passing through the great portal, we found ourselves in a large courtyard, leading into a succession of open courts and airy halls, lavishly decorated with fine carved wood and much gilding, and furnished with handsome blackwood carving from Canton—which is infinitely handsomer and more solid than the fine blackwood furniture of Bombay—beautiful scarlet draperies embroidered with gold, and lamps of fine coloured glass adorned with silken tassels. In the great hall a conspicuous place is occupied by the domestic altar, at which the ladies of the family daily offer the ancestral worship. Although the master of the house has not yet been baptised, he is himself a most devout and practical Christian, but he wisely deems it best to allow his women-folk perfect liberty of conscience.[1]

The ladies have already got over the national prejudice in favour of the total seclusion of women, and though custom would probably have forbidden their appearing in presence of Chinese men, they made no objection to our being accompanied by European gentlemen, and our pretty hostess came forward to greet us with the utmost courtesy and heartiness, accompanied by her little adopted son (adopted according to common Chinese custom, when there seems no probability of a woman having sons of her own, to perform ancestral rites on the death of the parents). In the present instance, the one bitter drop in this otherwise happy life-cup was that no son had blessed the marriage. So after the lapse of twelve years, Mrs Ahok made up her mind to adopt this "baby" boy, then six weeks old. He is now a fine little fellow, and a great favourite in the house, though he is by no means the only child about the place.

After the preliminary greetings, in accordance with Chinese custom, we exchanged particulars as to our "honourable ages," and

1 A wisdom which ere long resulted in their following in his footsteps. See chap. xi.

we were assured that our pretty hostess was upwards of forty-three. I felt inclined to say, as I truly thought, that she looked younger, but that would have been uncivil, as in China advanced years are honourable, and youth is of no account. But I still suspect that perhaps as some English ladies like to clip off a year or two, perhaps Chinese ladies may tack on a few!

Our host next introduced us to his grown-up sons by a previous marriage, and to their young wives. All were exquisitely dressed in robes of the richest silk, stiff with the very finest embroidery in silken needle-work—the elaborately embroidered skirts being arranged in deep kilt-plaits. Several of these silken skirts of different colours are worn one above the other.

By the usual course of prolonged torture, all their poor little feet have been reduced to such proportion that none of their dainty little embroidered silken shoes exceed three inches in length. But those of our hostess, who is a lady of high birth, and emphatically "lily-footed," are literally only two inches long, which is considered a superlative beauty. I ventured to ask my host to give me a pair of these miniatures which had actually been worn, as otherwise no one in England would believe that they were genuine. He not only most kindly complied with my request, but has sent me a whole assortment of new shoes belonging to each lady in the house, together with exquisitely embroidered wrapping-cloths, which take the place of stockings.

It is always a source of wonder to see how much ground is covered by the home of a wealthy Chinaman, with its various halls, chiefly consisting of roofs and pillars, with hanging-lamps and other decorations. Then there are all the separate quarters of the very numerous branches of the family, who live together in patriarchal style.

They conducted us through their several suites of pretty rooms, including all the bedrooms of the family, comfortably carpeted, which I fancy is a modern innovation. Piles of soft handsome quilts lay folded, ready for use, beside each beautifully carved four-post bedstead. These really are so fine that it seemed like gilding the lily to drape them with richly embroidered hangings.

Passing through various handsome reception-rooms for Chinese guests, we were conducted to one prepared for foreigners, which was so purely British that we were glad when "tiffin" was announced, and we were conducted to a luxurious dining-room, and sat down, a party of twenty, to what proved an excellent but somewhat lengthy dinner, in twenty-five courses! This, however, was

nothing remarkable, as a really elaborate dinner sometimes consists of forty courses and a hundred dishes, and lasts for about four hours, the guests being expected to taste every dish as it is handed round, washing it down with innumerable cups of hot rice-wine (which is often scented and fragrant), and concluding with a large bowl of plain boiled rice, just to correct any previous indiscretion in the way of rich soups and incongruous mixtures.

The main feature of a Chinese feast seems to lie in the preponderance of gelatinous food—*e.g.*, sharks' fins, *bêche-de-mer*, sea-weed, isinglass in the form of birds'-nest soup; fat pork and fat duck are also favourite food. How these people would enjoy calves'-head! but that, of course, is a forbidden luxury, being included in the Confucian prohibition (on utilitarian grounds) of beef.

On the present occasion everything was exquisitely refined, and of such unquestionable cleanliness, that the curiosity of tasting new dishes might be indulged without alloy. My host (who had placed me on his left hand, which he carefully explained to be the Chinese post of honour) had desired that, as each dish was brought in, an attendant should provide me with a neat little red ticket whereon was inscribed its name both in English and Chinese, and he himself kindly explained the nature of the multifarious dishes as each was offered, so I was able duly and intelligently to study the respective merits of birds'-nest soup with doves' eggs, sharks'-fin soup, mushroom, turtle, and duck soups, in which last floated delicate small pieces of bamboo, somewhat resembling asparagus. Then came soup of *bêche-de-mer*, *alias* sea-slugs, which does not sound nice, but is really like gelatinous calves'-head. Portions of all these were brought to each guest in small bowls of delicate porcelain. I may safely say that I tasted *everything* uncommon, and indeed I thought all the special dishes very good.

Then came soup of lotus-seeds, and of ducks' tongues, and various sweet soups, after which followed small stews and ragouts of every conceivable meat except beef, which is never seen at a Chinese table, oxen and cows capable of working the plough being accounted too valuable to the farmer to be consigned to the butcher. Very severe penalties are attached to the slaughter of such animals. The punishment for a first offence is a hundred strokes with a bamboo, and then two months in the wooden collar. Should love of beef, or desire of gain, induce a repetition of the crime, a second judicial flogging is followed by exile for life from the province.[1]

[1] I suspect, however, that this statement does not apply to North China, as I

Neither fresh milk, butter, nor cheese are used by the Chinese; but a preparation of milk and sugar, curdled with vinegar, is so much appreciated, that in South China there are "cows'-milk saloons" where, on warm summer evenings, epicures may indulge in this luxury.

As to cat, rat, and dog, those who are curious in such matters may procure them at restaurants in the city, but I understand that they do not grace the festivals of Chinese gentry. But what with roofs of the mouths of pigs, dragon's beard, vegetables, long-life fairy rice, Chinese macaroni, smoked duck and cucumber, salted shrimps, shrimps with leeks and sweet pickle, a very oily stew of sharks' fins, whales' sinews,[1] pigeons' eggs, fish-brains, crabs, roast ducks and mushrooms, stewed crab, fish with pickled fir-tree cones, pickled chicken with bamboo sprouts, ham stewed in honey, soles of pigeons' feet, "bellies of fat fish," sucking pig served whole, fried egg-plant, sliced lily bulbs, &c., &c., we found an ample succession of gastronomic interests. Then came peaches, pears sliced in honey, crab-apples and chestnuts preserved in honey and dried, loquots and cumquots floating in rich syrup, bitter almonds, walnuts, almonds with bean-curd, date-cake, radish-cake, and sweetmeats innumerable and indescribable, for which the Chinese appetite seems insatiable.

The only thing conspicuous by its absence was bread, which is never eaten at dinner. All manner of delicate little dishes of preserved fruits and pickles, such as water-chestnuts,[2] lotus seeds and lotus root, melon seeds and apricot kernels, were scattered about the table for the guests to play with between courses, and each was provided with a tiny silver plate for mustard, soy, or any other condiment.

was told in Peking, where the number of foreign residents is very limited, that 3d. and 4d. the lb. was the regular market price for beef and mutton.

I find, moreover, that in a standard work on Chinese native medicines, beef is classed with mutton, flesh of fowls, honey, &c., as a strengthening tonic. At Foo-Chow also, foreigners purchase beef at about 4d. the lb., but mutton is much dearer.

[1] As regards whale and similar articles of Chinese diet, it is interesting to remember that when in olden days whales habitually visited European shores, their flesh was sold in slices at the seaport towns, and our own ancestors deemed whale's tail and tongue choice delicacies, either roasted or served with peas.

Thus whale figures in the bill of fare of a London civic feast in A.D. 1425; and in Princess Eleanor de Montfort's book of Household Expenses, A.D. 1266, one entry is "Two hundred pieces of Whale, 34s."

Of other dainties which we no longer recognise as such, we find notes of the feasts provided for the Judges of Assize in A.D. 1596, and learn that at Winchester they were regaled with razor-fish, whelks, gulls, puffins, and kite-sparrows. At Dorchester they had dolphin; at Launceston porpoise served with furmenty, almond-milk, sugar, and saffron.

[2] Water caltraps.

In deference to our possible difficulties with chop-sticks, we were each supplied with lovely silver spoons of the regular Chinese form, very short, with thick handles. Perhaps I may as well mention that chop-sticks are very like a pair of stout knitting-pins. They are either made of ivory, silver-tipped, or of polished wood, and both are held in the right hand. If you will thus hold two knitting-needles and try therewith to pick up grains of rice, you may judge of the difficulty of thus obtaining a satisfying meal! One set does duty for the whole meal—soups, savouries, and sweets.

Sham-shu—*i.e.*, hot rice-wine—was freely served in beautiful little silver cups, engraven with characters signifying good luck. Hot almond-tea, peach-tea, and various other innocent drinks of the nature of cowslip wine, were also passed round, so that ere the close of the entertainment we had tasted a most wonderful variety of things new and old.

Among the greatest delicacies provided for us were ducks' eggs of a very dark colour, and of incalculable age—antediluvian, perhaps, as nothing is considered respectably old in China unless it dates back some thousand years! But, joking apart, the Chinese method of dealing with eggs is very curious. The charm of a lightly boiled fresh egg is quite unknown to the Celestial palate, which only recognises eggs when hard boiled, and much prefers them in advanced age.

For ordinary use, especially as a light diet for invalids, eggs are simply preserved by being steeped in salt water mixed with either soot or red clay, in which they are baked when required. But the truly refined process is to prepare a solution of wood-ashes, lime, and salt, mixed with water in which some aromatic plant has been boiled. This paste is run into a tub, and the newly-laid eggs are therein embedded in layers. The tub is hermetically sealed, and at the end of forty days the eggs are considered fit for use, but at the end of forty years they will be still better! They become black throughout, owing, I suppose, to the action of the lime. But the white becomes gelatinous, and the whole tastes rather like a plover's egg hard boiled. As the value of this dainty increases with age, the Chinese epicure discriminates between the eggs of successive decades, treating his most honoured guests to the oldest and most costly, just as the owner of a good cellar in Britain brings forth his choicest old wines.

A very strange delicacy, which is prized not only as pleasant food but also as a wholesome tonic, is a curious fungus[1] which

[1] *Cordyceps sinensis.*

attacks certain caterpillars while living, and after the larva has buried itself in the ground to prepare for its winter sleep, the fungus begins to sprout, kills the chrysalis, and a long stem appears above ground. This "summer grass of the winter worm" is collected, with the dead caterpillar attached, and is carefully dried in a combination of vegetable and animal food, which finds great favour.

So also does another dainty dish of the same class, which consists of silk-worms in the chrysalis stage which have been left homeless by the unwinding of their silken cocoon. They are boiled and served with hot chillies. How Confucius came to overlook such wicked waste of the precious silk-worm I cannot imagine. The dish, however, has the credit of being a cure for dyspepsia.

To-day's dinner had for me all the charm of novelty, even to the birds'-nest soup, which people in Britain suppose to be an ordinary article of diet, but which really is a very expensive luxury, as it takes about ten shillings' worth of nests to make an extremely moderate bowl of soup, of the strength of rather weak beef-tea. Indeed I suspect it is the belief in the iniquitous waste of using beef which has given such high value to this nutritive substance, whatever it may be—isinglass or swallows' saliva!

Mr Ahok has given me several nests as a curiosity. They are about the size of an average oyster-shell, and look as if they were made of pure isinglass. Of course, all the feathers, grass, and seaweed have been carefully removed before the nests come into the market. In point of fact, I believe that this pretty little white object is really a sort of bracket which the swallow builds out from the rock, as a support for the actual nest.

The supply must be something amazing, for I am told that Canton alone imports upwards of eight million nests annually! Those chiefly prized are the nests of a small swallow with a dark back and ashen-grey underside,[1] but the nests of some other swallows are also serviceable. Myriads of these birds haunt the rocky seaboard of many isles in the Eastern Archipelago, where their nests cluster in thousands. On the coast of Java there are five caves which each yield one million nests annually. They are collected three times a-year, after the young are fledged, the fowlers being let down the rocks by ropes, or else climbing up with the aid of ladders.

I am informed that some of these caves are farmed by individual

[1] *Collocalia esculenta.*

merchants; and a story is told of how a spiteful skipper, who had quarrelled with one of these swallow farmers, revenged himself by turning out a whole colony of bird-loving cats in the cave, where they took up their abode, and waged ceaseless war on the swallows.

When the nests reach China, they are sold on the sea-coast for their weight in silver, but their value rises considerably in the interior, varying from £2 to £7 per lb., the weight of an average nest being half an ounce.

What a fine thing it would be for Scotland if only the swallows of our Western Isles would take to feeding on the "Iceland moss" which grows so abundantly on the rocks, and there build brackets for their nests! What a new industry they might start for their country![1]

Out of consideration for European impatience of prolonged meals, this "luncheon" had been purposely reduced to the shortest limits of which custom admitted; nevertheless, the afternoon was well advanced ere we took our final leave of this truly hospitable and most friendly family, and returned here to receive sundry European friends.

CHAPTER XII.

A FIELD FOR WOMAN'S WORK.

Some notes on a family history—The "Christian doctrine" child—Work for women—"Possessed of devils"—"Answers to prayer."

AFTER this first introduction, I had many pleasant meetings with the various members of this family, and some details in their subsequent history have proved so interesting that I think I may venture to recount them here.

For one thing, various circumstances have combined to place Mr Ahok in the light of a public character—his wealth, his philan-

[1] The marvel is to see so excellent a food-supply wholly unheeded. To see (as on the shores of Lismore and Port Appin) rocks fringed with a rich crop of the golden weed, which, when sun-dried and bleached, is so valuable and so nutritive; yet while men toil early and late to grow a scanty crop of oats, this self-grown harvest of the sea is as utterly ignored as the fungus-crop of the land! I have only seen one woman take the trouble to collect any, and she only gathered a small quantity, though it grew before her door, and she pronounced it equal to good corn-flour.

thropy, his unvarying support of foreigners even when in antagonism to his own countrymen. It matters not what denomination of Christians need aid in the support of schools and hospitals, his purse is ever the first to open. Amongst other deeds of true generosity has been the purchase of a house in a healthy situation in the country, which he furnished with a view to its becoming a recruiting home for any over-wearied mission workers.

As I mentioned in a previous chapter, not many months after my departure from China I received tidings that he had cut the Gordian knot regarding the difficulties of obedience to the Fourth Commandment, and had consequently been admitted to baptism by the American "Episcopal Methodist" Church. Few in England can estimate the moral courage requisite for such an act, even after the sacrifice of business interests had been decided upon. The revilings of his own countrymen had already expended themselves, but the undisguised scoffing of some members of the foreign community might well have been spared.

In his own family he stood alone, for no other member dared to face the wrath of the living and of the dead.

About this time Mrs Ahok expressed a wish to learn English, that she might be able to dispense with the services of an interpreter when entertaining foreigners. She therefore persuaded a lady of the English Church Mission who had charge of a flourishing school for Chinese girls, to allow her to come thrice a-week to receive a lesson in English. Thus a real friendship was established between these two ladies.

After a lapse of some months, sickness entered this loving home. A little nephew and the darling little adopted son were both dangerously ill. The Chinese doctor could do nothing in the case, and the little nephew died. At last Mrs Ahok consented that her husband should consult the foreign doctor. The latter positively refused to prescribe unless a responsible English woman could be found who would stay in the house and watch the patient, and, in short, undertake to see that his directions were exactly carried out.

Of course the most natural friend to apply to was the English lady aforesaid, and it so happened that at this moment the girls at the Mission School had all been dismissed for their holidays, so she was free for some weeks, and quite willing to accept the anxious task, and was soon duly installed in charge of the sick-room. It proved a long illness, and one calling for much patient care, which was at length rewarded by the complete recovery of the boy.

This was perhaps the first time on record that an English lady

has actually lived in the home of a Chinese lady, and you can understand with what intense curiosity her every movement was watched.

Not a detail of her toilet was to be missed; but what she felt extremely trying was the great interest bestowed on her when she knelt in prayer, or sought a quiet time for Scripture reading. At last she felt this so oppressive that she rose one morning very much earlier than usual to secure the blessing of an hour *alone*. At the accustomed time came the inquisitive old mother (who all the time was doubly attentive to her own devotions before the ancestral altar). As usual she stood about on watch, but when noon came she could stand it no longer. "You have never prayed to-day," she said. "Oh yes," said Miss F——; "but I got up early that I might be alone." "Why," said the old lady, "surely you do not mind being looked at when you pray?" Miss F—— explained that she would certainly prefer solitude, greatly to the astonishment of her watchful guardian.

Of course she did not lose so excellent an opportunity of working in the Master's cause; but she did feel perplexed when one morning, after they had been reading the story of Hannah's prayer[1] and the birth of Samuel, the wife came to her and said, "You say that your God hears prayer, and gives you what you ask Him for. If you ask Him to give me a son, will He do so?" Miss F—— replied that undoubtedly He *could* do so should He see fit, but that it might not be for her good that He should grant such a prayer: adding, "If He *should* give you a son, would you become a Christian?" This she would not promise, but replied that certainly the son should be one; and finally made Miss F—— promise that every day while she was there she should kneel beside her and pray for this great blessing—her one heart's desire.

The adopted son recovered. The English lady left Foo-Chow for a while, and several months elapsed ere she returned to her work in that city. On doing so, she issued invitations to several of her Chinese friends to come and see her. Many responded, but her chief friend was conspicuous by her absence. Wondering at this, she soon found an opportunity to visit her at her own house, and asked her why she had not come to welcome her. "Why, how could I come?" she replied; "have you forgotten what you prayed for?" In truth, that prayer, like many another offered in half faith, had indeed wellnigh passed from a memory crowded with the busy events of every day's work. So it was in hesitat-

[1] 1 Samuel i. 11.

ing unbelief that the lady replied, "No, I have not forgotten. But——?" "Well, your prayer has been granted, and very soon I shall have a son!"

So spake the heathen mother. But the Christian lady (like those early Christians who prayed without ceasing for the liberation of St Peter, yet who greeted the messenger who announced that their prayer had been granted with the exclamation, "Thou art mad!"[1]) could not believe the words spoken by the woman, nor was it till her own hands received this specially God-given son that she fully believed that her doubting prayer had received so gracious an answer.

Before the birth of this Chinese "Samuel" all idols were banished from the house, and so soon as the infant was born, the thankful mother, true to her word, desired that he should immediately receive Christian baptism. I am not sure what baptismal name was selected, but from the hour of his birth the poor little innocent has been saddled with a tremendous Chinese name, "Hung-kau-nié-kiang," which means literally "The Christian doctrine child."

Some months, however, elapsed ere the mother found courage to quite give up the worship of her youth, more especially that of the poor ancestors. Ere long, however, a letter from her husband announced the glad tidings that his wife and mother, and some other members of the family, had all joined the Christian Church.

I cannot forbear quoting a few words from this good man's own letter, written in English: "I am happy to tell you that on the 18th June [1882] my mother and wife, and my brother and his wife, were baptised. I hope they will carry on Christian work, and be able to live as true and earnest Christians.

"A few days later, my brother's wife gave birth to a baby boy. The mother and baby are both doing well. I think it is a special gift from God, and I hope the babe may grow up to be the means of doing God's work, and be a comfort to his parents."

The letter goes on to say that he now has two Christian meetings every week at his store, and a monthly one at his house. He speaks of family difficulties arising from the fact of one of his daughters being betrothed to the son of a heathen family, who, though she is living in her father's house, have the right to control her actions, and will not allow her to go to school or to church, but constantly speak evil of the Christians.

Four years later, in October 1886, Mrs Stewart, writing from

[1] Acts xii. 5, 15.

Foo-Chow, says: "You would be rejoiced if you could see Mrs Ahok now—she is such a decided, bright Christian. A short time ago there were meetings for women only at the Methodist Conference, and at one of these Mrs Ahok was asked to tell about her visiting Chinese ladies in the city. I was quite delighted with the way she spoke—so simply and yet so well and clearly.

"She told us first of her own conversion: how she was worshipping idols and knew nothing about GOD, and did not even wish to know HIM, but in HIS mercy HE had sent one of HIS servants to her to show her the Light. She said that at first she felt much puzzled at all she heard, but that at last the Light dawned, and she learned to know CHRIST as her SAVIOUR. Then she felt so afraid and ashamed to confess that she was a Christian, but that now GOD had taken all that away, and she never feels either fear or shame, but loves to tell others about the LORD JESUS.

"Then she went on to tell of her going about in the city with the ladies of the Mission, to twelve different houses, and of the willingness of her countrywomen to listen. It was deeply interesting to hear her tell it all, and to see her strong desire for the conversion of others. It seemed such an answer to the many who ask, 'Do the Chinese become *real* Christians?' How few of our own country men or women feel it necessary after their conversion to tell others of GOD's love. But the Chinese consider this to be their bounden duty."

While Miss F—— was living in Mr Ahok's house, she made acquaintance with several other wealthy families, who came to condole over the child's illness. To her amazement she was cordially invited to visit them also in their own homes; and, though perfectly aware that her primary object was to teach Christian faith and practice, several mandarins (themselves heathen) urged her to come and instruct their poor ignorant wives.

To her astonishment, the more she went about, the more was she convinced that this invitation was no empty form, but the true wish of both the ladies themselves and their husbands. In one house after another the ladies thronged around her, entreating her to stay with them and to teach them to read. Unfortunately it was quite impossible for her to avail herself of these invitations, as she already had her hands over-full of work, and was, moreover, conscious of failing health, which soon afterwards resulted in the doctors ordering her to leave China.

I have no doubt that a personally winning and attractive manner weighed largely in evoking such cordiality from these Chinese

ladies, but the fact of such invitations having been earnestly made, points unmistakably to the fact that here lies a vast field for Christian workers, which can only be undertaken by women—and, moreover, women very specially endowed with the peculiar talents requisite for a very difficult task. Probably very few English women are capable of doing successful work in Chinese zenanas, for its conditions are altogether unique. It is not enough that there should be "a willing mind," and a zealous love for the Master—there must also be a power of influencing others, a clear judgment, a loving heart, unbounded patience, and that rare talent, the power of teaching.

The physical strength of the zenana worker is a serious consideration; and whether she can stand the climate, which, to some constitutions, is found so trying, she must have a talent for languages, to enable her to master the most difficult of all tongues, to speak it gracefully, and to read it in its own puzzling characters.

One of her most important studies must be that of the wearisome etiquette, on which no nation lays so great stress as do the Chinese. The formulas of speech, the civilities to be observed on entering or leaving a house, on welcoming guests or bidding them farewell, where and when to sit and when to stand, how to behave at table and on every other conceivable occasion—all these are among the topics that must be thoroughly mastered by the English lady who desires to produce so good an impression on a Chinese household as to make her presence and her teaching acceptable.

Even a servant at a roadside inn is entitled to feel injured by such want of respect as might be shown by a customer taking the cup of tea which is brought to him in a careless manner, instead of courteously placing both hands beneath the cup! How endless then may be the causes of unintentional offence! which, however, are readily forgiven if the visitor is sufficiently alive to the danger, to offer some word of apology for his possible ignorance of Chinese custom.

Already a few workers have come forward who seem to fulfil these requirements, and who are ready to devote their lives to this labour of love. More are urgently needed, for truly the harvest is plenteous and the labourers few. There are multitudes of homes to which admission may shortly be obtained, in which wives and mothers are now carefully training their sons to most devout ancestral worship—that mainspring of Antichrist which lies at the root of all evil in China, and which forms the one insuperable bar to all progress. Win the mothers, and the sons will follow suit.

This is, indeed, laying the axe to the root of the wide-spreading tree of Chinese heathenism.

Picture to yourselves such a field for women's work as is here offered to those able and willing to undertake it. As a sample, I will speak of one home. It is a large house with eighty inhabitants—five generations there live together in patriarchal style. Many of these ladies *have not been out of the house for years.* And what have they to occupy them indoors? Embroidery—dress—possibly children to play with—making cakes and other things as temple-offerings, and the never-failing worship of the dead.

To this house there enters an English lady, and the inmates of the big house crowd around her, and plead, "*Do* stay and teach us;" but she has other work to attend to, and is compelled to leave them. Must they be left? Has not Britain daughters who are fitted for this work? educated Christian women who find no special scope for their talents in this crowded land, but who there would find an ample field, rich in human interest—among women who, whatever may be their nature as heathen, become warm-hearted and affectionate so soon as a ray of Christian love strikes home to them.

Many, also, are capable of great intellectual development, and are, moreover, possessed of wonderful memories, so that, apart from the deeper joy of striving to bring the Divine Light individually home to these dull hearts, there is the satisfaction of knowing that whatever they learn is sure to be treasured, and passed on to others, and then again to others—

"Like circles widening round upon a clear blue river."

As an instance of how earnestly some Chinese women crave instruction, I may mention that the first pupil of the London Mission Girls' School at Peking was a lassie who had actually disguised herself as a boy in order to attend school. Great was the excitement and indignation of the masters when this was detected. Happily a foreign lady came to the rescue and started a school for girls. It appears that in Northern China female education is utterly neglected, and few women, even of high rank, can read. In the south, however, it is different; and there are not only many schools for girls of good position, but some are instructed at home by private tutors, who find in them such apt pupils that China is by no means exempt from blue-stockings, learned in Confucian classics, and, moreover, holds in high honour the memory of sundry ladies who in successive ages have thus distinguished themselves.

There have even been instances in which ladies have found opportunity to display quite masculine talents. To say nothing of the two Tartar Empresses who have so long ruled the Empire from the seclusion of the Imperial palace, there is the case of a Chinese Joan of Arc who distinguished herself as a leader of the Triad forces in 1855. She assumed this position in order to avenge the death of her father, who had been captured and cruelly tortured by the Imperial troops. She repeatedly led the Triad army to the attack, when she fought like a fury, but was eventually captured and executed.

All these cases go to prove what good strong material there is to work upon, now lying fallow in these overcrowded houses.

Hitherto the contact between Chinese ladies and foreigners has been almost *nil.* As regards their humbler sisters, a great advance was effected when it was found possible to train middle-aged Chinese women, and send them as Bible-women to teach their neighbours. In some places they are sent out, two and two, in order to teach wherever they can find opportunity; and as a Chinaman greatly venerates an educated woman, it is found that in seeking to win the women, they very frequently influence the men also, and lead them to forsake idolatry.

But the case in point is how to carry the Light into the dull homes of ladies whose social status now holds them prisoner. Even supposing that some rumour of a brighter life has penetrated into one of these dull homes, how apparently hopeless a barrier is the feeling of its being a breach of propriety for a woman to come out of her seclusion, especially to speak to a man—and yet probably the Christian catechist of some neighbouring village is the only person who could give the desired teaching. Hence arise such pathetic incidents as one recently discovered at the village of Tong-A, where, day by day, the women assembled to learn from the lips of a little girl only five years of age, who, with the marvellous memory of her race, could already repeat the Creed, the commandments, the Lord's Prayer, some hymns, and many passages of Scripture. Truly a touching illustration of the words of the Hebrew prophet, "A little child shall lead them."

Another difficulty in the way of Chinese ladies seeking instruction for themselves, lies in the barrier of their poor deformed little hoofs. There are indeed some instances in which even small-footed women have contrived, Sunday after Sunday, for years, to hobble a distance of several miles to and from a Christian service (just as in Scotland I have known a poor cripple who through a

long life rarely failed to drag himself many miles every Sunday to attend the ministrations of his favourite preacher), but such cases are exceptional, and the mass of Chinese small-footed women are virtually prisoners, wholly dependent on the services of their large-footed attendants.

It is to minister to these, and to win from idolatry the mothers of the next generation, that English ladies are needed—ladies so truly in earnest that they can be content to win the sympathy and respect of their sisters, not merely by attention to essentials, but also to wearisome external ceremonies. Those who bring warm hearts to such work, will very soon awaken such abundant personal affection that they will find no cause to complain that their labour is unsatisfying.[1]

One thing which, to all Christian workers among the Chinese, proves a very great charm, is the whole-hearted, resolute way in which they stand by their faith when once they have resolved to accept it. They are so intensely conservative that they are very slow to give up the worship of their ancestral idols, but when they do so they transfer to the new service more than the old zeal, and withal bring with them a simplicity of faith which looks for the working of miracles in answer to prayer, and so practically obtains them.

For truly I know not how else to describe some (out of many) incidents, which nevertheless cannot be gainsaid. The strangest of these have reference to a class of sufferers whom the Chinese themselves always describe as being "possessed of devils." They have distinctive names for true insanity, and for hysteria, catalepsy, and various forms of mental disease, and they draw the line quite distinctly between these and this "spiritual possession," as it is invariably called, both by heathens and Christians.

The symptoms are so precisely those which were thus described in Biblical days, that foreigners, after vainly seeking for some medical term to express the condition of the victim, are fain to accept the Chinese solution. They find a being apparently mad, foaming at the month, tearing off every shred of raiment, and wildly appealing to God to let her (or him) alone. These par-

[1] In case these pages should fall into the hands of any lady who has any inclination for such work, I would venture to suggest that she should communicate with James Stuart, Esq., Church of England Zenana Mission, 9 Salisbury Square, London, E.C., or else with Miss Webb, 267 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London, who represents the Society for Promoting Female Education in the East, by whom also subscriptions will gladly be received from any who, unable to help in person, are willing to aid in sending others.

oxysms return at short intervals, and the Taouist and Buddhist priests are called in to perform costly and prolonged ceremonies of exorcism, which are continued till the paroxysm is over, and are renewed on its next return. One of these exorcisms consists in sacrificing a goat and anointing the brow of the sufferer with its blood. At other times goat's blood is administered internally, as being a powerful emetic; but in this case, instead of causing sickness, it is expected to counteract this devil-sickness.

In a considerable number of cases such as these, the native Christians have been appealed to by their heathen neighbours to see whether they could do anything to help them; and these, remembering how of old those who had faith in the Master were enabled to "cast out the spirits by His Word, and to heal all that were sick," have sought to follow in their wake, and taking up their position beside "him that was grievously tormented with a devil," have there wrestled in prayer with passionate earnestness, pleading that the true GOD would reveal His power in the presence of the heathen, and concluding with the apostolic words, "In the name of Jesus Christ I command thee to come out." Again and again their prayer has been granted; the wild tempest has been allayed, and the sufferer lulled to a condition of deep peace, whence, after a while, he has arisen to go forth "clothed and in his right mind" to tell his heathen brethren of the marvellous way in which he has been cured, and, in short, to become from that hour a faithful worker in the Master's cause.

It really appears as if some of the miraculous "signs and wonders" which prepared the way in the earliest days of the Church in Judea, were in some little measure permitted to the infant Church in China. Take the case of the man out of whom Jesus cast the legion of devils, who when he was "in his right mind" prayed Him that he might be with Him, but was commanded to *go home to his friends and tell them* what great things the Lord had done for him. So the man obeyed, and the result was that when Jesus returned thither, the whole multitude came out to meet Him, bringing all their sick to be healed.[1]

This is precisely the story of at least one of the Bible-women near Foo-Chow. She had long been known to her neighbours as being "possessed of devils," and when the Christians found her, she was foaming at the mouth, wildly tearing off her clothes and struggling against one whom she addressed as "the Holy One" (a title she could never have heard used in the sense it conveys to

[1] Mark v. 15–20; Matthew xv. 22–31.

us). The simple earnest prayers that were offered on her behalf prevailed: she not only was "healed," but came to seek instruction at the Mission, and to pray that she might be baptised. She there remained till she had succeeded in learning to read, and then would stay no longer, for she said she must return to teach in her own village. Though very poor, she refused to accept of any salary as a Bible-woman, for she said, "The people will listen and believe when they see that I do not do it for gain."

So the next time that this remote district was visited by a clergyman of the Church of England Mission (the Rev. R. W. Stewart), he found that not only had this woman already induced several of her relations, who hitherto had been bitter opponents of Christianity, to give up their idols and worship God, but that a good many more had commenced to attend the Christian service and to wish to learn about it. In China such a beginning as this one year, means that five years hence there will be a large congregation in that place!

Another case of what the Chinese call being possessed by devils, is that of a girl eighteen years of age, who for years had been thus tormented, notwithstanding all the efforts of the exorcists. At last she begged her parents to apply to the catechist for help, as she had heard that the Christian's God had cured persons who like herself were grievously afflicted. Her parents rejected the idea as being quite too absurd. If any one could help, of course it was the idols, and they were able and willing to present offerings and pay for temple services. So they renewed their costly exorcisms without the smallest avail. At length the entreaties of the poor sufferer prevailed, and the father went to the little Christian chapel and told his sad story to the catechist, who told him that if he wished God to cure his daughter he must first put away all his idols, and resolve to worship the Lord Jesus, and that then the Christians would pray for his daughter, and if it seemed well to God He would answer their prayer. The man was in a great strait, for he reverenced his idols, yet he loved his daughter, and she was in sore distress. So he resolved to give up the idols, and then several of the native Christians, full of childlike faith, went to the house, and for two long nights they earnestly prayed that God in His great mercy would bid the evil spirit depart. That their prayer was heard and answered, they had most practical reason to believe, for on the morrow the sufferer was well—not a trace of illness remained, except extreme weakness, which passed away in a day or two, and the girl, now bright and intelligent,

learnt "Our Father" as her first words of prayer from the lips of Patience, the catechist's wife.

Another woman was present who had been healed in just the same manner by "the prayers of faith." "Wonderful is the great power of God," said Patience, as she related the woman's history.

I will quote only one more instance of the cure of this peculiar phase of suffering, which, like those I have already mentioned, occurred in one of the country districts in the Fuh-Kien province (of which Foo-Chow is the capital). A poor woman, said to have been for long "possessed with a devil," became worse and worse; her friends, grieved to see her thus tormented, called in a sooth-sayer, who ordered the usual offerings at idol shrines. At last the family began to suspect that this man was simply extorting money from them, and it occurred to them to consult the catechist, and ask him to pray for her. This is in a district far away from those I have previously spoken of; but here, too, the prayer of simple faith availed, and the woman and her husband have ever since been regular attendants at Christian Church services.

These are but a few of the cases reported in this immediate neighbourhood. But a long list of very remarkable cases of the same sort has been recorded by Dr Nevius, of Che-foo, in North China, as having come under his special observation, or that of his assistants. The reverend doctor has been described to me by a medical man, who is himself distinguished for singular strength of character, as being "the most hard-headed, matter-of-fact man I ever met." Yet so firmly is he convinced of the spiritual character of these physical afflictions, and of their supernatural cure, that he purposes ere long publishing his voluminous notes on this subject.[1]

Possession.—This subject is so very remarkable, that I think it is well to quote the medical testimony of so competent an authority as Dr J. Dudgeon, as given in his official report of his hospital at Peking. He says, "The Chinese believe in possession by evil or depraved spirits, which may inhabit the individual disguised as foxes, hedgehogs, weasels, or snakes. In the country there are small houses everywhere for the worship of these animals." (This is on the same principle as the worship of the thirteen medical

[1] I had hoped to have received from Dr Nevius some details from his personal observations, but regret that they have failed to reach me in time for insertion here.

goddesses, most of whom, such as the Goddess of Small-pox, represent divers diseases.) "The colours belonging to these are black, grey, yellow, and white respectively. The worship of the fox has been particularly prominent at Peking of late years, and so great were the crowds of people that flocked to its shrine, soliciting the cure of all manner of diseases, that the officials have lately had to order its removal to a temple." "The persons supposed to be 'possessed' seem to be in ordinary health, but on close inspection something odd and queer, especially about the eye and speech, may be detected. They seem to be beyond their own powers of will. What they do is done unwillingly; they feel compelled to act the way they do."

Dr Dudgeon goes on to cite certain cases which came under his notice, but to which his medical skill seemed wholly inapplicable, and all attempts at cure futile. One was that of a man who, convinced that he was "possessed" by a fox-spirit, had partly opened his windpipe to give it exit. Though he had no pain, he frequently beat his breast, shoulder, and head violently. The more the doctor tried to reason him out of his phantasy, the more he belaboured his poor body; and though the wound in the throat received medical treatment, these constant flagellations effectually prevented its healing.

He gives in detail the history of a whole family of whom the majority believed themselves to be possessed by snake-spirits. They live in Manchuria, forty days' journey from Peking; and after enduring terrible miseries from these hallucinations (if such they be), the father, Mr Hsü, travelled to Peking to report the case to the official who is imperially appointed to the care of this branch of corporal and spiritual affliction. Apparently the spirits were running riot in the district, for, in the same village, in one family of the name of Hwang, consisting of seven persons, five had died from the persecution of spirits. In the family of Hsia, out of seven persons, five had died from the same cause; in the family of Lan, out of nine persons, seven had died, and so on, through half-a-dozen other families.

Mr Hsü came to the hospital to see whether the foreign doctor knew any special way of treating spirits, where priestly exorcism had failed. He came several times and repeated his story without any variation. He said that his family consisted of himself, his wife, five sons, and two daughters.

First of all, a snake entered the body of his fourth son, who died. The corpse was carried to the mountains to be cremated,

but when all the fuel was burned, there lay the body intact. A second time was cremation attempted, with the like result. So the body was left on the hills, and a white fox came and devoured it.

On the same day a snake coiled round the leg of his second daughter and entered into her body. Her colour changed, she could not straighten her limbs, and eventually she died, and was carried to the mountains and there was duly cremated.

In the following year the snake took possession of the remaining seven members of the family, who all became unconscious, and were unaware of what was going on around them, or of their own actions. When apparently nearly dead, they all gradually recovered. After a while, however, the eldest daughter, aged eleven years, was again possessed by the snake-spirit, and also by that of a weasel, which sprang on to her head from the top of a wall. At first her arms and legs quivered and moved in all directions; presently, however, she could only move her hands and feet, and gradually became quite helpless and died. Then her father, who himself was under the control of the snake, carried her to the mountains and burnt her body.

Five months later his wife, aged thirty-nine, was also killed by the snake. As she was being placed in her coffin, two clouds, one white and the other blue, descended and covered the courtyard with so dense a mist that people could not recognise one another. After the coffining the clouds disappeared, but they returned in the evening and hovered over the coffin until midnight, emitting a yellow light as brilliant as that of day. At midnight they vanished.

When Mr Hsü himself fell a victim to the snake-demon, he went to pray to "the Lord of Heaven," when straightway the heavens were rent by lightning and thunder, but still there was no deliverance. Then he resolved to come to Peking "to lodge a complaint," and as he left his door again two brilliant clouds, one green and the other purple, each some twenty feet in height, descended and stood by the house for the space of half an hour.

Such was the story earnestly related by this poor man, and which does not seem to have struck his Chinese hearers as by any means incredible; in fact, it appears to have exactly accorded with their own belief of spirit-possessions.

The English doctor, however, seeing that any attempt to reason with the man (in order to convince him that this was all a hallucination) would be utterly futile, thought that possibly a harmless deception might be of use. So as the man firmly believed in the possibility of driving out the evil spirit which took the form of a

snake, the doctor solemnly blindfolded him, and with much ceremony pretended to go through an operation for the extraction of the snake, so working on the man's imagination that he struggled convulsively at the moment when the snake-demon was supposed to be cast out. The bandages were then removed from his eyes, just in time to let him catch a glimpse of a large white snake drowned in a basin of water, which he was of course led to suppose was truly his tormentor. The man did believe this, and for the moment seemed relieved; but his familiar spirit was by no means to be got rid of by any such foolish device, and a few days afterwards the doctor found "him that was possessed of devils" at the Buddhist Lamasery imploring the priests to chant prayers to drive out the evil spirit.

Of this *hsieh ping*, "disease of evil spirits," Dr Dudgeon remarks that it is sometimes accompanied by abdominal distension, and sometimes the disease goes to the head and the afflicted person turns black. With reference to the case which I have just quoted, he says, "This was evidently not epilepsy, nor hysteria, nor ecstasy, nor delirium like D.T.; nor catalepsy, nor insanity, nor chorea. What was it? His outward symptoms when he presented himself suggested the latter affection. Every minute or two he cried out, and his body, but especially his head, was shaken convulsively. We tried the effect of nervine sedatives, but with no benefit. As the man knew nothing about the religion of Jesus, we did not attempt the Biblical method of casting out devils. Had we such a case again, I should feel inclined, from the success reported by the Rev. Dr Nevius of Che-foo, to try the Scriptural plan. As it was, we were poor exorcists."

While I am speaking of these subjects, I will tell you of one more prayer which certainly was honoured by a most direct and immediate answer in the sight of the heathen.

In the village of O-Iong lives a noble old man of the very unmusical name of Chung-Te. He was the first to embrace Christianity in that district, and as a matter of course has had much to endure for the Name he loves. For the first six months after his baptism he walked eighteen miles every Sunday to a village where a Christian service was held. After that, a catechist tried to settle in O-Iong, but when three houses in succession had been pulled down about his head, he judged it prudent to retire. His place, however, was filled by another zealous convert, who now walked thirteen miles every Sunday to meet Chung-Te in his own village and endeavour to form a congregation.

But still Chung-Te was the sole Christian resident, and for long he stood utterly alone, except for the sympathy of a dearly-loved wife, who shared in his persecutions. She died, and not one neighbour would come near to help the worshipper of Jesus in rendering the last offices to the dying and the dead. Local custom there requires that when one has died, the body must be fastened to a chair in the reception-room in a sitting position, as if awaiting guests. All this he had to do alone, though no guests would come; and when it came to his insisting on a Christian funeral, with no idolatrous ceremonies, there was a frightful uproar, and he was seized and cruelly beaten, and the mob would have torn down his house had not the town magistrate happily interfered. He had one little daughter, who, child as she was, inherited her mother's devotedness. She was her father's only human comfort, but she had been betrothed in infancy to a heathen, who claimed his child-bride, and custom compelled the father to let her go.

But the brave-hearted Christian remained true to his colours, and never ceased striving to persuade others to become followers of his Master, so that he has come to be known throughout the district by the nickname of " Praise-the-Lord." But the name is no longer one of contempt. Such has been the influence for good of this solitary servant of the Cross, that not only has a Christian congregation been gathered together in his own town, but several smaller ones have formed themselves in the surrounding hamlets.

The incident to which I alluded occurred at a recent fire which broke out in one of the streets of O-Iong. There was at first no apprehension of its spreading to that part of the town in which old Praise-the-Lord has his humble home.

Gradually, however, the flames swept nearer and nearer, and soon it was evident that the street was doomed. In this extremity, the heathen called upon their gods, and bringing out all their idols, they placed them in rows, hoping to check the advance of the flames.

This was too much for the zealous old Christian. Denouncing the folly of his neighbours in looking for protection to senseless gods of wood and clay, he seized the heavy mattock with which he works in the fields, and proceeded to belabour the poor idols till they lay in fragments. Then, in presence of the already wildly excited mob, he raised his hands to heaven, calling upon " the great Creator—the true God, his heavenly Father," to save him and his neighbours from the approaching flames.

It was not the first time that he had proven the promise, "While they are yet speaking, I will hear," and now he looked for an immediate answer, which should show to the heathen that the God who could stay the fire was the true God. Nor was he disappointed; almost before they could note any physical reason for the change, the flames seemed blown back upon themselves—the wind had suddenly veered round, and though many of the houses close by had been seriously scorched, those of the old man and his neighbours escaped unharmed, and the marvelling crowd saw the conflagration recede as swiftly as it had approached.[1]

CHAPTER XIII.

A MANDARIN AT HOME.

A wealthy home—Melon seeds—Dull lives—Fine clothes—Street scenes—Street cookery.

This afternoon we went by special invitation to the house of a very wealthy mandarin, who, being also a merchant, has mixed a good deal with the foreign community, and so has got over the national prejudice against outer barbarians. His women-folk, however, have as yet had little or no intercourse with foreigners, and he wished us to see one another.

Their home is in the heart of the great city, so, leaving this island in our wicker chairs, we crossed the river by the great bridge, and were carried for more than an hour through the densely crowded town which forms the suburbs of the great walled city. There seemed no end to the twists and turns of the long and foully dirty streets, where the extraordinary variety of bad smells makes the possession of a nose a serious drawback. At last we reached a high blank wall, forming one side of a dingy street, and on being admitted within its ponderous wooden gates, we found ourselves in the courtyard of a purely Chinese house.

The sudden change from the dirt and squalor and dense popula-

[1] Though this incident is on so tiny a scale compared with the other, I could not hear it without recalling those thrilling deliverances from the great Hawaiian Fire-River, of the city which again and again has seemed to be on the very verge of destruction. See 'Fire Fountains of Hawaii,' chaps. xi. and xxiii. By C. F. Gordon Cumming. Blackwood & Sons.

tion of the streets, to the large enclosure with luxurious houses and pleasure-grounds, which form a sort of patriarchal encampment for the family of a wealthy great man, is most startling. Our host, robed in rich dark-blue satin, came to receive us in the outer court, where, after many bows and much shaking of our own hands, pressing together our clenched fists, we left our chairs and coolies, and then passed the kitchen, and crossed another court, when we reached the great reception-hall, decorated with much beautifully carved very open woodwork, and furnished with the usual handsome small tables and ponderous chairs of polished blackwood, with slabs of marble forming the seat and back. In honour of our expected visit, seats, divans, tables, and walls were decorated with the richly embroidered scarlet-cloth covers, which are always produced on ceremonious occasions.

The weather being hot, we fully appreciated the cool shade of a small dark room, in which we were invited to sit a while ere being conducted to the presence of the ladies. Tea was of course brought in, in the usual small cups without saucers, but with covers resembling saucers fitting loosely into each cup—the use of the cover being to prevent the leaves from entering the mouth when drinking (for the correct way to make tea is to put a pinch of leaves in each cup, and thereon pour boiling water, every cup being thus made separately: of course sugar or milk is never used).

On the little tables were set the invariable plates of sweetmeats and small cakes. But the quaintest addition to these are the little plates of water-melon seeds, which all the Chinese delight in picking open and nibbling, in accordance with a Chinese proverb which expresses the satisfaction of always having something in the mouth. In this respect the whole race are like squirrels, for in every idle moment the entire population, rich and poor, find solace in cracking melon seeds with their teeth, picking out the seeds with the tongue, and spitting out the empty shell. As they walk along the street, or at the social chat, to beguile the tedium of a journey, or to lighten the cares of business, the infallible remedy is melon seeds. Even at the theatres the spectators are provided with little plates, and an attendant walks about with a large basket to replenish them again and again, so that the sound of the cracking seeds is heard incessantly, and the floor is invariably strewn with them.

They are offered for sale everywhere. In the districts where melons grow abundantly, the refreshing fruits are freely offered to

all comers on condition of their saving and restoring the seeds. These are collected in great bales as articles of commerce, and form the chief cargo of many junks on the rivers. Small children, busy merchants, great mandarins, alike delight in them. At the New Year friends bestow on one another complimentary packets of melon seeds folded in red paper ; and even the poorest coolie generally contrives to spare a few cash for the purchase of this luxury. I am told that this curious passion for melon seeds prevails throughout the Empire, and that the four hundred millions of Chinamen are all insatiable for these dainties !

One entertainment here provided for us was a musical box made in Hong-Kong, which played all the favourite purely Chinese airs, and we were astonished to find that several struck us as really pretty. As a general rule Chinese music is so terribly loud, and is played by so many utterly discordant instruments of various sorts, that the name suggests only ear torture, castanets and drums utterly drowning whatever melody may be produced by guitars, flutes, and violins, which are supposed to play in unison with shrill human voices ; but as neither voices nor instruments are ever strictly in tune, the combination is never harmonious, whether heard in theatres or temples, or shrieked by street musicians. Therefore, to have a real Chinese air rendered on a musical box, with no such additions, was a most unusual treat.

When we had sat the orthodox time in the cool recess off the great hall, we were taken into another room, where we found our host's two sons studying with their Chinese tutor. They are nice, well-mannered lads, with some knowledge of English. The oldest, who looked about sixteen, was married, and we found his young bride with her mother-in-law when at length our host conducted us to the ladies' quarters. Both were painfully shy, and shrank back awkwardly into a dark corner, not attempting to greet us with the ordinary elaborate forms required by Chinese courtesy. They just knew enough of English custom to be aware that foreigners dispense with such, and so they did not know how to act.

At the bidding of the husband we were obliged to do the correct thing, and examine their wonderfully dressed and jewelled hair, their exquisitely embroidered clothes, and the dainty shoes, literally only two inches long, which covered the poor little deformities which are forced to do duty as feet. Throughout this process the ladies stood utterly irresponsive, like mute automatons. Unfortunately we were not accompanied by a female interpreter, and our host, who spoke excellent English, positively declined to assume

that duty, and soon retired, leaving us alone with the ladies, whom we then persuaded to sit down beside us. Being Canton women, both were highly rouged, the paint being carried right above the eyes. The younger lady was very brightly coloured, but the elder had subdued the paint with powder. Attendants (whose larger feet enable them not only to walk naturally themselves, but also to carry their helpless tottering mistresses) brought for our inspection a tray whereon were displayed the family jewels, consisting chiefly of small pieces of bright-green jade and very good pearls, also dainty ornaments and gorgeous head-gear of brilliant kingfishers' feathers, so set in gold as to resemble the brightest and most costly enamel.

Of course we admired everything, but the position was oppressively dull, and as soon as we could venture, we took leave with all possible courtesy, and rejoined the gentlemen. Our host then exhibited piles of the ladies' dresses—dresses of silk and of satin, of every shade of texture for hot weather or cold, all plaited in kilt folds, and all most elaborately embroidered. He told us the price he had paid for each article, and also how vast a sum he had expended on his son's marriage-feast, and what an immense number of tables had then been spread. With special delight he related how, when he had left China on a visit to some foreign country, the custom-house officers would not believe that his multitudinous changes of raiment could all be his own wardrobe, and were not intended for sale.

Somewhat overpowered by all this gorgeous apparel, we made our ceremonious farewells, our host escorting us to our chairs at the outer court, when we again shook our own clenched fists up and down most vehemently, with lowly bows. I see really polite people raise the said fists to touch their bent foreheads in a devotional attitude, which, I believe, is the correct form of chin-chinning!

The great doors closed behind us, and we passed from the presence of Dives to that of Lazarus. Once more we were in the filthy streets, and surrounded by wretchedly poor people and beggars clamouring for infinitesimal coin. Yet, as we were carried along, we caught glimpses of strangely picturesque scenes, and ere we neared the river, the shades of evening were closing in, the wayfarers had lighted the paper lanterns which they carry suspended from a wooden handle, and the shops had hung up their quaint lamps of transparent horn, or painted glass, or oiled paper, some octagonal, some oval, others globular,—lamps of all colours,

with a predominance of crimson or yellow. These, suspended from the overhanging balconies, shone on the tall scarlet or green signboards with their strange gilt characters. Then were revealed scenes of religious or domestic life in dimly lighted interiors—here a supper-party, busy with their chop-sticks, devouring bowls of rice with savoury accompaniments; there the house-master, renewing the offerings of food and flowers on the family altar, and lighting the tapers and the incense-sticks for the evening sacrifice.

A man greatly in favour is the street cook, who, with his locomotive oven and a whole array of pots and pans, prepares savoury stews, which the wayfarers devour there and then with infinite relish. Those who wish for an hour's rest, or for a quiet talk with a friend, can secure both by entering one of the large tea-drinking halls, where covered cups are at once brought to them, each containing a measure of tea, whereon the waiter dexterously pours boiling water from a large kettle. Probably they will call for melon seeds and tobacco, possibly also for some sweetmeats; and ere they go their way they will have a second cup of tea for the good of the house, for all which entertainment they will each pay about six cash, equal to about a halfpenny; or if they have been very extravagant in the matter of sweet cake, their liabilities may have run up to a penny a head![1]

CHAPTER XIV.

THE KUSHAN MONASTERY.

Paved footpaths—Up the mountain—Ancient and modern disciples of Buddha—Printing-press—Dormitories—One hundred and eight vows—Opium-smoking—Votive pigs and fish—Refectory—Offerings to small gods—The temple on the stream—Rock inscriptions—Bell tolled by water—Buddha's tooth—The great temple.

March 21st.

THERE is one disadvantage in spring-time connected with expeditions by land in the neighbourhood of Foo-Chow—namely, that

[1] I confess that when, on returning to England, I have looked round on the squalid wretchedness and dirt of the densely crowded quarters in which our poor are huddled together, and have seen the hungry loungers gazing longingly through dingy windows at terrible slices of cold roly-poly, pies of leaden pastry, with an infinitesimal fragment of unknown meat, unsavoury sausages, sickening heaps of

whenever we emerge from the densely packed streets of the old city, we find ourselves in the midst of that most hateful form of agriculture, paddy-fields, where the fresh young rice is growing in deep mud, with a shallow surface of water. In and out among these flooded fields wind narrow stone paths, barely two feet in width, but often raised to a height of from four to six feet above these little lagoons of liquid mud; and when (as is frequently the case) we meet a train of heavily burdened coolies, or some foreigner or great mandarin being carried in his chair, there comes an anxious moment as to whether *we* or *they* are most likely to be deposited ignominiously in a very undesirable mud bath!

Beyond the paddy-fields we find regular paved roads leading up to various points of interest in the Paeling hills, such as monasteries or tea-plantations, and at every turn of the road we have fine views looking down on the valley, where the great Min river winds like a silvery ribbon through the labyrinth of small green fields.

A very favourite expedition (and one, moreover, which has the advantage that the greater part of the distance is done by luxuriously floating down the river in a comfortable house-boat) is to a famous Buddhist monastery, which nestles in a sheltered spot half-way up the Kushan, or Drum Mountain, right above the Arsenal.

The mountain is 3900 feet in height, and the monastery is about 2000 feet above the river—a pleasant cool refuge in hot weather, and one to which the courteous monks frequently welcome foreigners requiring change of air. Here, in exceptionally cold winters, snow has been known to lie for a few hours.

This morning being clear and lovely, we were early astir, and by 7 A.M. our good chair-coolies had shouldered their living burdens and were trotting us down to the river, where the house-boat lay in readiness. An hour's pull brought us down to the Kushan anchorage, a distance of about eight miles, but the tide was so low that we had to row some distance in the small boat, and then brave the dangers of a long plank and stepping-stones across deep mud, through which the poor coolies had to plunge, and then they carried us for half an hour along a narrow tortuous path between flooded paddy-fields, where patient buffaloes and Chinamen were ploughing knee-deep in mud.

ready-shelled whelks, and other unpleasant-looking shell-fish—luxuries in which they could not afford to indulge,—my thoughts have travelled back to the Chinese street cooks with positive veneration. And as to the luxurious halfpenny tea-hall, which takes the place of England's gin-palace, there indeed China does excel the barbarians of the West.

Thus we arrived at the base of the mountain, and then commenced the long and toilsome ascent of a great stairway of fifteen hundred granite steps, reminding me painfully of the ascent to similar Buddhist monasteries and shrines in Ceylon. Here, as there, I believe that many of these mountain stairs have been fashioned as acts of merit or of penance by wealthy devotees. Probably to the same cause may be ascribed the ornamental rest-houses, five of which invite the pilgrim to repose on his journey to Kushan.

Above the long flight of stairs we found a well-constructed causeway of granite slabs, by which we passed along levels through the forest, past curious ancient tombs, and then still on and on by paved levels till we reached the monastery—a delightfully secluded spot in a snug green valley. It is a large but not very picturesque group of venerable buildings, eight hundred years old.

Three large buildings, with deep thatched roofs, widely overhanging, are arranged one behind the other, and enclosed by a great general court.

All monasteries that I have visited are constructed on the same principle. The outer gateway is invariably guarded by two huge and monstrously ugly figures, while four others equally hideous, and representing the incarnation of the genius of North, South, East, and West, occupy a second building, which is the hall of the gods. These are supposed to be the ministers of Buddha's will and pleasure. I cannot say he has displayed much taste in the selection!

Then we come to the Great Temple, which is a detached building in the middle of a great court, around which are cloisters, apartments for the abbot and for the monks, dormitories, a library, reception-room for guests, halls consecrated to many Hindoo gods (all of whom are supposed to do homage to Buddha), the great refectory and the kitchen, where of course vegetables only are supposed to find admission, neither fish, flesh, nor fowl—not even milk, butter, or eggs being tolerated by the sumptuary laws of the founder: as regards butter, it is in no case recognised by the Chinese as fit for food, and milk is so only when curdled and sweetened. But this vegetarian rule is not so hard as might at first sight appear, the majority of the brethren being men of low estate, and the fare of the working classes consists almost entirely of vegetables, with perhaps a square inch of pork once a fortnight.

These various departments are each under the care of some divine guardian, to whom is dedicated a more or less ornamental

shrine. Those of two gods, respectively named Weito and Kwan-tai, lie to right and left of the main quadrangle, these gods being considered the special guardians of monasteries. Kwan-tai, being the God of War, must, I suppose, be reckoned as the Defender of the Faith.

In the dormitories a watchful god protects the sleepers, while in the monastic kitchen (as in that of every well-regulated family in China) the kitchen god receives devout daily worship.

But the great centre of all worship is, of course, the colossal image of Buddha, who sits enthroned on a gigantic lotus blossom. In some temples he sits solitary, in others he is represented by three images all exactly alike, representing the Past, the Present, and the Future—while another variety (more common in pictures than in images) shows him seated between two figures, equally cyclopean, apparently of beautiful women, but really representing two beloved Indian disciples, named Kashiapa and Ananda. These great central images are frequently very fine, and convey a feeling of intense calm and repose strangely in contrast with all the bewildering variety of extraneous gods, whose noisy worship is so diametrically opposed to the whole teaching of the founder; and yet in every monastery there are numerous idols of all sizes, some of wood and some of copper, some of porcelain, some of stone, and some of clay—some gaudily painted, some lacquered, and many gilt. Some monasteries are adorned with life-sized statues of the five hundred most saintly of Buddha's original disciples.

The shrine of the Goddess of Mercy is invariably conspicuous, and seems to rank next to that of Buddha. In some monasteries she has a separate temple.

Of course every monastery of any note prides itself on the possession of some relic of Buddha, whose fragments, rescued from the funeral pyre, must indeed have been multiplied miraculously! This is preserved in a bell-shaped dagoba, frequently made of white marble, resembling, on a very small scale, the cyclopean dagobas of the ancient cities in Ceylon. These in China are generally kept within a special hall, but sometimes in pagodas, whose seven or nine storeys are apparently designed to suggest multiplied canopies of honour, overshadowing the precious treasure below, just as in Burmah the Great State Umbrellas consist of from three to seven canopies piled one above the other on the same stick.[1]

[1] That this was the true origin of the Pagoda I have no doubt, the use of the Umbrella as an honorific symbol being most curiously exemplified on some of the

In some monasteries there are shrines of honour of the founder of that particular institution, as also of the most noted abbots who have therein ruled. As this office is only held for three years, an abbot must be a man of rare sanctity or ability to make much mark in so limited a period. Re-election for a second term is, however, not infrequent, but it does not follow that the most saintly abbots are the most popular! The election lies entirely in the hands of the senior priests.

Some monasteries have a private printing-press, where are printed devotional books of the Buddhist offices and broadsheets in honour of the Goddess of Mercy or other deities. I have several such, which were given me in various monasteries. The method of printing is that which has here been in use for many centuries; it has the advantage of extreme simplicity. The matter to be printed is cut on a block in high relief. Indian ink is then applied to the block, upon which a sheet of paper is pressed, and that is all. Where the demand is moderate and no one is in a hurry, this seems to answer very well.

This is a general summary of the chief features of such monasteries as I have seen, and I am told they are all on the same system, only varying in size and detail. Here, at Kushan, provision is made for the accommodation of about three hundred priests and monks, that being the number who claim Kushan as their headquarters, but rarely are more than half that number on the spot. The rest are sent on ecclesiastical or begging work all over the country, to raise funds for the repair of temples, or to perform noisy and costly religious services in every house where a death has occurred, or where the mysterious illness of any inmate leads to the conclusion that the sufferer is "possessed of devils," who must be duly exorcised.

We were allowed a peep into the dormitories, which have small compartments curtained off on each side, the slumbers of the inmates being consecrated by an altar at one end of each room. The privacy thus secured is, of course, designed to encourage meditation

oldest Buddhist sculptures in India, where relic-shrines are represented overshadowed by from one to fourteen most realistic umbrellas, sometimes set side by side, sometimes arranged pyramidally. In one of these sculptures on the Amravati tope, *a forest of no less than fifty lotus-leaf umbrellas is shown thus piled all over the summit of a dagoba.* A cast of this curious sculpture is exhibited on the Grand Staircase of the British Museum (No. 39).

In two papers published in the 'English Illustrated Magazine' for June and July 1888, I have grouped many interesting details on the development both of PAGODAS and AUREOLES from the honorific use of the UMBRELLA, as also to show how very recently the latter has come into general use.

and prayer, as it doubtless does in many cases, for amongst the brethren there must be some of all sorts, as we readily inferred from the very varied types of countenance—some so calm and reflective, but many debased and sensual, fully justifying the contempt with which the majority of these shaven brethren are regarded by the secular community.

Of the former, we were told that some subject themselves to agonising penances in their zealous determination to triumph over the poor flesh, and that, not content with fastings and flagellations, they voluntarily submit to having their flesh seared with a sharp-pointed red-hot iron, one such scar denoting each monastic vow. The number of these varies in different parts of the Empire, nine or twelve being the most common. But some devout souls make a hundred and eight vows, and endure a hundred and eight burnings to imprint them on their memory. These fiery reminders are generally made on the forearm, but some proclaim their devotion to all beholders by thus scarring their forehead, which, of course, gives them the appearance of having suffered from smallpox. Others burn off a finger as a self-imposed penance. Some have been known to burn off a whole hand, and practise other forms of self-torture, quite ignoring the fact that all such actions were prohibited by Buddha.

But, on the other hand, it is well known that a very large proportion of these men assume the yellow robe late in life to secure an easy-going idle sort of livelihood, while some herein seek an asylum from the legal punishment for divers crimes. The law, however, does not recognise any right of sanctuary for murderers. Of course the vows of these unworthy brothers are continually broken, and not only are prohibited meats freely brought in for private consumption, but further, the cubicles designed for silent meditation become sanctuaries of the opium-pipe, indulgence in which is acknowledged, by every Chinaman without exception, to be an unmitigated evil, though so few who have once yielded to it have the courage to endure the physical and mental misery which invariably attends giving it up. But so many priests of all ranks are the slaves of this most insidious of vices, that there appears to be a mutual agreement to ignore its practice in the monasteries.

We passed on to inspect a court wherein sundry fat pigs, fowls, and other live stock, which have been brought to the temple as "offerings," are allowed to live in peace, and die of old age. It is an act of merit thus to secure them from all danger of being put

to death, and a handsome sum is of course paid down for their permanent maintenance. The monks are supposed to be such very strict vegetarians that should the hens chance to lay eggs, they (the eggs) forthwith receive decent burial! Another form in which the same class of merit is acquired is by the purchase and release of pigeons, or small caged birds, which are captured for this express purpose by special bird-catchers, who herein find a fairly lucrative profession. Others again bring fine carp and other fresh-water fish, which have been purchased alive from the fish-mongers, and which are set free in the great temple-tank, there to live merrily ever after, being fed at stated hours. The tank at the Monastery of the Flowery Forest at Canton swarms with tortoises which have been thus rescued.

We entered the refectory just as the brethren were assembling, in answer to the beating of a large wooden drum, shaped like a nondescript animal. All had assumed their cowls as the monastic form of dressing for dinner. Tables are arranged round the hall, and all the monks sit with their backs to the wall, so that each one may face the abbot. The laying of the table is not elaborate, only two empty bowls and a pair of chop-sticks being placed for each person.

When all had taken their places, at a given signal they rose, placing the palms of the hands together in a devotional attitude, while one of the number beat a small prayer-drum, and the abbot recited a long prayer, after which one of the monks went outside and placed a small heap of cooked rice on a red pillar (red being the colour of good luck, and hateful to evil spirits) as an offering to all the minor gods who might have been inadvertently overlooked in the general worship. Having done this, he snapped his fingers thrice, and the small gods came in the form of birds and accepted the offering. Then followed a long grace, during which an attendant went round, filling each man's bowls with rice and green vegetables, which all proceeded to devour hungrily in total silence.

Leaving the brethren to the enjoyment of this frugal fare, we found a pleasant spot outside of the monastic courts where we might indulge in a non-vegetarian luncheon without risk of shocking the stricter brethren; not that any objection is made at this monastery to their visitors publicly feasting on prohibited flesh, consequently picnic-parties from Foo-Chow or the Anchorage occasionally select the main court for very elaborate luncheons, a proceeding which scarcely seems in good taste.

Following a tempting path along the hillside, we came to a very pretty temple of carved wood painted deep red, with curved roofs of grey tiles. It is built right over a very narrow cleft in the rock, from beneath which there formerly flowed a rushing torrent, but its noise was so distressing to a very holy old saint who formerly lived here that it hindered his devotions, and so he prayed that it might be silenced, and ever since then the stream has been wellnigh dried up, and only a low soothing murmur tells of the rippling waters low in the gully.[1]

The rocks hereabouts are all covered with large inscriptions deeply engraven, and filled with red paint. Many of these are in the old seal character, and even the most modern are in the regular Chinese character, which, to the uninitiated, always looks so very mysterious. It is really distressing to learn that though many of these imperishable inscriptions are really poetic aspirations, a considerable number merely record the visits of certain notable pilgrims to the monastery, and are in fact only an elaborated version of Smith or Jones' scribbles on the Pyramids or elsewhere!

A little farther we came to a very pretty kiosque, consisting only of pillars supporting a highly fantastic roof. This overshadows a rock, on which are engraven and gilded a multitude of tiny gods. I believe that these represent the five hundred Lohans (which in Old Sanscrit hymns are called Arhans),—spiritual beings, never seen of men, but whose voices are sometimes heard in these shady groves at early dawn, chanting the praises of Buddha.

From a water-spring beneath this rock-altar flows a streamlet, which, being led through the mouth of a stone dragon, thence falls so as to turn a wheel which acts on cogs; these in their turn jerk a rope, which swings a small beam of wood suspended horizontally from the roof. At every rebound this beam strikes the outside of a large bronze bell, producing a very deep-toned melodious boom, which is heard afar up on the mountain. Thus by the action of the Dragon-Fountain the waters have continued throughout the long ages to pay their ceaseless tribute of praise to Buddha. It is a very pretty scene; but in order to realise it, you must mentally fill in a thousand details of Chinese fancy—odd bits of grey stone

[1] How strange a parallel is the legend of this Buddhist hermit to that of St Francis of Assisi, as related by his successor at the Convent Delle Carceri on the Monte Subasio! Here a tiny chapel on the brink of a deep rocky ravine commemorates how, when St Francis here sought peace for meditation, the noise of the running waters so distracted him (how I do sympathise with these silence-loving saints!) that he rebuked the mountain torrent. And the reverent stream obeyed, and from that hour until this present day it has hushed its turmoil, and no matter how fiercely the rain-storms sweep the mountain, it flows in hushed stillness.

and redwood carving, ornamental stone bridges, bright flowers, and rich foliage, sunlight and warm deep shadows, and, over all, the great mountain towering to the blue heaven.

Returning to the monastery, we were taken to see one of Buddha's holy teeth, which is kept in a dull crystal casket in a securely locked shrine. An elephant's tooth lies before it, as an appropriate votive offering. The Buddhists of China have a good many such relics of their great leader. I confess that, having long ago done homage in Ceylon to the lineal descendant of the only genuine article, I looked on these with distrust, and not without good reason.[1]

Far more interesting than the spurious relic of a dead past was the afternoon service in the great temple, in presence of the Three Pure Ones—*i.e.*, three gigantic gilded images of Buddha, which, although symbolising the Perfect Buddha of the Past, the Present, and the Future, are all exactly alike, and are each overshadowed by a gilded canopy. Large gilt statues of the disciples of Buddha are ranged on each side of the temple. Three very handsome altars of black lacquer, with gold and crimson decorations, red candles, and altar vessels of pewter, are dedicated to three different groups of idols, and one large central altar stands in advance of these three. The usual handsome banners and richly coloured lamps light up the sombre shadows of the roof.

The great service of the day is held at 4 A.M. every morning, when all the inmates of the monastery must be present; many are necessarily absent from the afternoon service, having work to attend to. Nevertheless there was a large muster, and we had a good opportunity of noting the variations in the dress of divers ranks. The majority wear the orthodox yellow robe, but some have a yellow cowl, some a rose-coloured or lilac ecclesiastical hood, while others wear a grey robe. Even the best-dressed priests all have their robes made of many pieces patched together to keep up the semblance of the tattered raiment of poverty. Some hold in their hands rosaries of large black beads, and some of small beads, but I did not notice whether all had these. Of course all heads are closely shaven — bald as billiard-balls of pale yellow ivory!

[1] Captain Gill has told us how in Northern China he was taken to see "The Tooth of Heaven," which he found to be merely a bit of red sandstone shaped like a tooth! The worshippers must certainly have supposed that Buddha was addicted to chewing betel and areca nut! The relic occupied a small temple, the roof of which, however, did not cover the stone itself, the Chinese believing that were this done, the god of thunder would devastate the town.

The ritual was very elaborate, accompanied by many prostrations and genuflexions, and at one point in the service the whole congregation, who had been standing sideways to right and left, veered round to the altar, recited some formula, and made a low bow.

Time and tide bade us hurry away, so we could only look hastily into the side chapels, in one of which are numerous images of the thousand-armed Goddess of Mercy. On one of these minor altars I observed a vulgar black bottle doing duty as a flower-vase! —a strangely incongruous object in the midst of so much gilding and colour, and such beautiful pieces of fine old china.

Retracing our way through the forest, along the stone pavement, and down the long stairs, we reached the paddy-fields at sunset, and found the patient men and beasts still ploughing. The house-boat was now able to come alongside, so we were spared the horrors of recrossing the mud, and an hour later we reached the green isle in time for a pleasant non-vegetarian dinner-party.

CHAPTER XV.

TEMPLE THEATRES.

Ecclesiastical plays—Entertainment for gods—A blue crowd—Hunting scene —Ballet—American Mission—A fine view.

March 29th.

I HAVE been very much amused to-day by a great "Sing-Song" at the Ningpo Joss-house, or, I should rather say, the great guild of the Ningpo merchants in Foo-Chow, for the place is really their club; and in China a temple, with its attendant theatre, forms a necessary feature in every well-regulated club.

I must say that of all the odd methods ever devised by any nation for combining amusement with religion, I know of none so quaint as the theatrical entertainments provided by wealthy Chinamen for the edification of their gods. In Europe we have had miracle-plays, such as still attract crowds to Ober-Ammergau; but the intention of these is emphatically to convey deep religious impressions to the minds of the people, whereas the temple-plays in China are solely intended to amuse and propitiate the idols, who are supposed, in common with their worshippers, to have a passion

for the drama, and to share their wonderful power of endurance as regards the length of their plays, some of which are dragged on for three whole days, from dawn to sunset.

"Lingering sweetness long drawn out" exactly describes a Chinaman's ideal "Sing-Song," but to foreign ears the sweetness which so entrances the Mongolian is a torture of shrieking discord, which very soon becomes intolerable. One great advantage, however, is that these plays are all in the open air. Moreover, they are generally acted in full light of day, as in the province of Fuh-Kien, of which Foo-Chow is the capital, theatrical performances in temples at night are forbidden, except on very special occasions, as are also illuminations, on account of the danger of fire.[1]

At these temple-plays no seats are provided, and there is no payment: they are the great and gratis entertainments of the people, who attend in crowds. It is a strange sight to look down upon that densely packed yet ever-restless throng, almost all dressed in blue—that sea of flat faces and shaven heads which fills every available corner of the temple court, and of the steps leading up to the altars, above which the idols sit enthroned. The stage is always a separate building facing the temple—a sort of kiosque, open on three sides—its beautifully carved, curly roof being supported on carved pillars. The court is enclosed by open corridors with galleries, in which seats are provided for the mandarins and principal citizens.

In the lower corridors many barbers ply their trade diligently, for skull-scraping and hair-plaiting is a business which must not be neglected, and which can be successfully combined with the enjoyment of the play. Vendors of refreshments find a good market for their wares.

Regular playgoers soon learn to discriminate between the different troupes who travel about the country just as theatrical companies do in Europe, and whenever a very wealthy mandarin wishes

[1] In some great cities there are regular theatres conducted on the same business system as our own, with a regular tariff for admission. My experience of theatres of this class was limited to two—one in Shanghai, and one in San Francisco, and I need only remark of these, that they were two too many; although on each occasion foreigners had been specially invited by Chinese gentlemen, on the understanding that the plays selected should be irreproachable.

On the other hand, I rarely missed the opportunity of attending a temple-play, and though, of course, I could not understand what was said, I have no reason to suppose that these were objectionable; in fact, as the lives of the Chinese gods and goddesses are chiefly remarkable for their strict morality (as contrasted with the mythology of Rome, Greece, Egypt, or India), it follows that the plays most pleasing to them are such as inculcate virtue and show the penalties due to vice. Certainly, as scenic effects, these were almost invariably quaint and attractive.



A TEMPLE THEATRE.

to gain popularity with the gods and with his fellow-citizens, he engages a first-rate troupe with magnificent properties, and the performance is admirable. But sounds of theatrical music may attract you a few days later to the same temple, and you may find a wretched company of the veriest sticks, clad in shabbiest raiment, having been engaged by some poorer merchant. Then, in place of a dense crowd of most respectable citizens, the audience is composed of a limited number of the lowest of the people.

As a matter of course, the very best troupes are engaged by the great mercantile guilds for their magnificent temple-theatres, and these are always worth visiting.

On the present occasion, having gone to the Ningpo Guild with Mrs De Lano, we first obtained a tantalising glimpse of the scene from the roof of a neighbouring house, where one of our Chinese friends was sitting with his sons. Wishing for a nearer view, but not caring to face the dense crowd, we entered the guild (which is practically a club) by a side door, which took us right into the actual temple, where the kindly priests put us into a good place just in front of the great altar, whence of course we had a perfect view, and a stranger scene I never beheld—the temple, the theatre, and the side courts one mass of richest carving in wood and stone, crimson and gold, with the grey, curiously carved roofs harmonising with a brilliant blue sky. The pillars supporting both the theatre and the temple are powerfully sculptured stone dragons.

The vivid sunlight gave intensity to the dark shadows, and brilliancy to the gorgeous dresses of the actors. Round the galleries sat mandarins and merchants drinking tea and cracking melon seeds, and the court below presented a closely packed sea of blue shoulders, and heads either visibly shaven or covered with the orthodox small black satin cap.

We were told that the play which was being acted was in old Manchu. To our unaccustomed ears the difference in sound from modern Chinese was unappreciable; but we noted the absence of "pig-tails," and the prevalence of immensely long black moustaches, which are a thing unknown in this land of clean-shaven faces, where the right to wear a thin straggling grey beard and moustache is a privilege of advanced age.

Having no interpreter, we failed to gather the plot, but the loss was probably not serious, all we cared about being the scenic effect; and we gazed till we were weary at ancient Emperors and Empresses, mandarins, and courtiers, clothed in silk and satin, and most exquisite embroidery in gold and bright-coloured silks. Such

gorgeous gold-dragon embroidery! how we wished we could have brought it home for decorative hangings! There is no theatrical sham about it—it is all *bonâ fide* genuine hand-work, very handsome and costly. Some of the mandarins' head-dresses were very quaint, those of governors of provinces being adorned with the two immensely long tail-feathers of the Reeves pheasant, which are fully six feet in length. These great men are further distinguished by the funniest little flags floating from each shoulder like wings: these, with the long feathers, suggest a likeness to some gigantic insect.

The faces of the actors are coarsely painted, some being of a ruddy brown, laid on so thick as to shine. The service of the play is all done by men in the commonest blue coolie dress! It is so odd to see them moving about among the gorgeously arrayed principal actors. There is no attempt at stage illusion—no curtain, no shifting of scenes, beyond the most primitive alterations in the stage furniture. If a culprit is to be killed by fire from heaven, you see a coolie climb up and scatter an inflammable powder, to which he sets fire. The victim, of course, falls dead; but a moment afterwards he gets up and walks (or at least crawls) off the stage.

Some of the women's dresses are exquisite as specimens of rich embroidery, and it really is almost impossible to believe that these dainty little ladies are really all men: no woman is ever allowed to appear on the Chinese stage. How the actors contrive to be such perfect actresses passes my comprehension, but even the small feet are perfectly simulated, and the uncertain mincing gait, as also the shrill feminine voice, which is produced by a high ear-piercing falsetto, which after a while becomes most irritating to the listener, and makes us hope that Chinese ladies do not really talk like that at home.[1]

I was told that these male prima donnas command very high salaries. One whom we saw in San Francisco had been imported from Peking on a salary of 10,000 dollars a-year.

The orchestra is barbaric in the extreme, the accompaniment to sentimental or sorrowful scenes being a squeak produced by a horse-hair bow on a fiddle with one horse-hair string. The more energetic passages, which are delivered in resonant tones, are empha-

[1] I remember once as a great treat sending an unsophisticated Scotch maid to the Italian Opera in London. She was, however, much disgusted, for, said she, "I am sure that no real leddies and gentlemen would go skirling and throwing themselves about in that fashion"!

sised by a thundering clamour on a brass gong heightened by the clashing of large cymbals, and rattling on metal and wooden drums: after this deafening noise the ping of small banjos, or even a solitary trumpet-blast, is quite a relief. Happily in these temple-plays the orchestra is not so powerful as at a regular theatre, where the tremendous din continues throughout the play—pantomime, speeches, and battles each having appropriate accompaniment.

But the plays themselves are all sound and fury, with a most exhausting turmoil of bluster, bellowing, braggadocio, rant, and display of demoniacal rage and ferocity. The marvel is how such frowns and such contortions can be kept up, especially as one marked feature is that of eyes "bursting from their sockets," as the saying is.

Now and then it is evident that an actor is really full of quiet humour, and that he contrives to infuse some gleams of fun into his heavy part, much to the pleasure of an appreciative audience.

After various episodes in Imperial life, we were favoured with some most exciting hunting-scenes, in one of which an Amazon queen shot a tiger with bow and arrow. It was a noble Chinese tiger, with beautiful fur, much handsomer than the hairy tiger of India, and it had fierce green eyes. It rolled over quite dead, and the attendants tied its legs to a bamboo and carried it off in triumph. The illusion was not improved by the very patent fact that it wore large white-soled Chinese shoes on its hind paws![1]

Then followed a sort of ballet, alternating with really excellent acrobatic feats. Poles and horizontal bars were erected, and clowns and tumblers, all carrying fans, favoured us with various gymnastic performances, a good deal like those of our own athletes; but a special character was given to the whole by the extraordinary figures of the *corps de ballet*, who rushed in between each gymnastic feat, while the singers and musicians screeched and yelled, and vied one with another which could produce the most deafening noise. The effect of the whole was that of a most hideous and perplexing nightmare; and the long-sustained shrill falsetto, without any change of tone, in which these male actors converse in their feminine characters, fairly gets on one's nerves after a while.

[1] The acting of this troupe was excellent, and I was much amused a few weeks later, when visiting the Foo-Chow Guild at Ningpo, to find the identical company acting this identical piece! Rather an odd coincidence.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE OFFERINGS OF THE DEAD.

The hill of graves—Foo-Chow Arsenal—Potted ancestors—A picturesque funeral—Longevity boards—Chinese All-Souls' festival—The Ten-Year festival—Ancestor worship the key to Chinese life—Service at the Temple of Imperial Ancestors at Peking—Compulsory mourning seclusion—Influence on judicial decisions—The great bar to Christianity—The three souls—The City of the Dead—Spirits in prison—Release from purgatory—Offerings to beggar spirits—Enormous annual expenditure.

FOO-CHOW, *April.*

STRANGE to say, the place which was made over by the Chinese authorities to the British, as the site for this foreign settlement, is a cluster of green hills which are all dotted over with ancestral graves. How the dead have been induced to tolerate our presence and our buildings it is impossible to say; doubtless the officials have made additional offerings, and have duly explained to the dead that they really could not help themselves, and only yielded to the brute force of the barbarians!

This was done in the most literal manner when the authorities determined on establishing the Arsenal at Pagoda Anchorage, for, as a matter of course, many graves were dotted over the land required for the immense workshops. So a great feast, lasting four days, was held to appease the wrath of the dead thus disturbed for their country's good, and they were humbly besought to take up their quarters at a temple which was then built for their special benefit high on the hillside, above all the foreign houses.[1]

The whole country is strewn with graves; the dead are buried here, there, and everywhere, wherever the astrologers declare that they have found a lucky site; and though certain sunny hillsides are pretty closely covered with picturesque horse-shoe-shaped tombs, the graves are never crowded together as in cemeteries.

So in this foreign settlement, while the grassy hills are crowned by luxurious foreign bungalows, the slopes are marked by a free sprinkling of these homes of the dead, some of which, judiciously placed beneath the shadow of fine old gnarled fir-trees, are really

[1] We may be very sure that the truly conservative Chinese have not failed to recognise the retributive vengeance of the spirits in the lamentable destruction of this offending Arsenal!

very ornamental and in good taste. Some are shaped like a gigantic trefoil, formed by the combination of three horse-shoes, showing where three honoured members of some great family have been buried in one group, and some are embellished by handsome scroll-work, and guarded by weird stone animals.

Some very old graves are neglected and broken, revealing their hid treasures, which in this case are not the accustomed ponderous coffin, but red earthen jars, in which are stored the bones and dust of some poor wanderer who has died far from home, but whose remains have been charitably brought by some friendly fellow-workman to be laid with kindred dust, in order that the spirit of the dead may share in the annual offerings of the family. These are familiarly known as "the potted ancestors"!

From the verandah where I frequently sit, I command an excellent view of all the near grassy hills sloping down to that strange "City of the Dead," where hundreds of coffins lie, each in its hired house, awaiting the lucky hour for burial—for in death, as in life, every detail must be regulated in obedience to geomancers and fortune-tellers.[1] I need scarcely say with what keen interest I watch the various processions and ceremonies connected with the funerals, and with the worship of the dead, which are constantly passing before us.

These three first weeks in April are specially devoted to the service of the dead—they are a prolonged "All Souls'" festival, here called Ch'ing-Ming. During its continuance, the whole population seems to be in a state of movement, for every one who can possibly manage to do so visits the graves of his family in person; and as men, women, and children all go forth in troops, the ceremony partakes rather of the nature of a cheerful picnic. Family parties arrange for a day's "outing," and start from the crowded cities on a holiday excursion, combining duty with pleasure. They

[1] Besides the edicts of the stars affecting individuals, they are supposed to influence almost every day of the year, rendering these specially lucky or unlucky for specific actions. There are certain days on which no man in his senses would shave, lest he be afflicted with boils; others on which no farmer would sow, else a bad harvest would follow. There are days on which no man would buy or sell property; others when to dig a well will insure finding only bitter water. To open a granary on certain days would be to admit mice and mildew. To begin roofing a house on a given day betokens having soon to sell it. There is one day on which no householder would repair his kitchen fireplace, as his house would inevitably ere long be burnt. Another day is shunned by match-makers, as insuring ill-luck to the wedded pair. One day is especially dreaded by shipbuilders, for to commence building a ship, or to allow one to sail thereon, is to court shipwreck. So in the rearing of cattle, the care of silk-worms, in travelling or in staying at home, days of luck or ill-luck must be specially observed, lest the stars in their courses should fight against the presumptuous mortal who ignores them.

have perhaps to walk many miles over hill and dale, bearing the stores of good things, which their ancestors happily only care to smell, so that they themselves may count on an excellent feast on their return home.

The offerings, which are so pleasing both to the dead and to the living, are carried on trays, or else in large flat baskets of split bamboo, slung from the ends of long bamboos which are balanced on the men's shoulders. They include a variety of cakes, roast ducks, fowls, fish, and sometimes a pig roasted whole, or perhaps only a pig's head with his tail in his mouth, which is symbolic of the whole animal. Of course the value of the offerings varies with the wealth or poverty of the family, but the poorest must provide some food and some paper money, and many invocations on yellow paper.

In each family party, one member is told off to carry the hoe with which to weed the grave. From it hang suspended many strings of paper cash and paper sycee (the block money, like little silver shoes or boats), representing fabulous sums of Celestial coin. Others carry samshu—*i.e.*, sweet rice-wine—in joints of bamboo, which form nature-made bottles; and others again bear the paper semblance of all manner of useful objects, such as clothing, trunks with separate great locks for external application, writing materials, opium-pipes, sedan-chairs, houses, horses, and even attendants, all made of pasteboard or paper, not forgetting incense and candles, for the dead are in the Dark World and require light.

As in duty bound, on reaching the graves some of the women weep and wail piteously, but they soon commence helping in the task of weeding and tidying the ground, and spreading the feast. All the good things are arranged on little dishes before the tomb, which is covered with the invocations on yellow paper. The incense is lighted, the ancestral spirits are summoned by ear-splitting beating of brass gongs or cymbals. Then the leader of the party puts on a long blue robe, and an official hat with a red tassel, such as is worn by the literary class, and proceeds to read the special liturgy appointed for this occasion, entreating the dead to guard and bless the living, to protect them from evil spirits, to send them good things of all sorts.

Then all the paper offerings are burnt, and the flame is fed by a moderate libation of rice-wine, which thus becomes invisible and available for spirit use; all the paper gifts are in like manner transmitted to the unseen world, there to become tangible and very useful to the recipients. While the flames ascend heavenward all the

family prostrate themselves, and strike their heads on the ground nine times. The ancestors having meanwhile absorbed the essence of the good meats, the hungry human beings are at liberty to pack up the otherwise untouched dainties, and carry them away to be consumed at the family feast.

One day last week I watched a very grand funeral, at which the chief mourners were women who wore loose white dresses in token of the deepest woe; the men wore a rough sort of blouse of sack-cloth, with a white sash round the waist. Every one present wore some piece of white, in lieu of our crape. First came the bearers of large white paper lanterns—always picturesque objects. Then a band of musicians dressed in white, and making a horribly discordant noise with drums and gongs to drive away evil spirits. Then came men carrying trays of cakes and other good things for the funeral feast. These were followed by more musicians apparently trying to drown the noise of the first lot. These wore common blue clothes. After them came coolies carrying pigs roasted whole, kids, and various other savoury meats set out on trays.

Then followed a highly decorated sedan-chair, in which was carried the tablet of the deceased, with tapers burning before it. Behind the tablet came a group of men dressed in red, carrying a large red flag with inscription in golden characters. Next came the coffin—very handsome and solid, formed of four large boards rounded on the upper side, and about four inches thick. They are called longevity boards, and their value is a matter of great interest and importance. They are invariably bought unpainted, that the purchaser may select the grain of wood he prefers.

When the procession reached the lucky spot selected for the grave, the coffin was deposited on the ground, whereon the mourners beat their heads, wailing bitterly; while two yellow-robed priests performed some office of religion, incense was burnt, and a multitude of crackers fired to terrify the demons. Then the coffin was laid in its place, and wailing and cries of lamentation rent the air. When the grave was filled in, more crackers were fired by delighted small boys with shaven scalps and long pig-tails—joss-sticks were lighted and stuck in bamboos, and so planted round the grave. The feast was spread and left for a while, that the hungry dead might feast on its essence. Then the survivors carried off the gross substance for their own use, and marched off pretty cheerily, while all the musicians combined their efforts to drown sorrow by such a din that must surely have driven away the affrighted devils.

Far more pathetic than this rich noisy funeral was one which I saw yesterday just below this house, and which touched me greatly from its simplicity. It was that of a very poor woman, and with the exception of the men who carried the body and dug the grave, the only mourner present was a fair-faced child, perhaps six years of age, in white funeral dress. When the men had finished digging the grave, some one came and apparently told them that they had mistaken the "Lucky Site," for after a prolonged altercation they set to work to dig another a little farther off, leaving the little child alone beside the bier, whereon lay the dead mother beneath the shabby piece of thin red cloth which served as a pall. It was a most pathetic scene in real life, and made one long to comfort the little desolate creature, whose very foreign features and complexion too plainly suggested the poor woman's sad history.

When the second grave was finished, and the dead laid therein, the child was instructed to light the incense-sticks and burn some paper money and yellow paper prayers, and then all was over, and only a few scraps of half-burnt yellow paper strewn on the newly turned sod marked where lay one more "ancestor," to whom that little child must continue to do homage to the last hour of his life.

On the edge of the fir-wood just beyond this house there is one grave in which I take a special interest, for the sake of the poor widow whose proceedings I watch day after day with never-ceasing wonder. She always arrives about the same hour, and, sitting down on the grave, commences a low pitiful wailing. Though the ceremony is somewhat theatrical, this voice of mourning is inexpressibly sad. Gradually she works herself up to a pitch of apparent agony, and throws herself prone on the grave, weeping and wailing, and calling on the dead by every endearing name. Her cries re-echo from hill to hill, like the coronach of the Celts; they certainly are most distressing to us, the unwilling hearers! By the time when one might suppose her to be stupefied with crying, and her head splitting with pain, a neat young woman always comes to fetch her. She at once arises, tidies her dress, and then the two walk off together chatting quite cheerily!

Many mourners bring letters to the dead, which they leave on the upright tombstone, laying a stone on the paper to prevent its being blown away. Others, of a utilitarian turn of mind, spread some vegetable (I think it must be tobacco) to dry on the sunny horse-shoe wall!

In order to be truly acceptable, the offerings to the dead should

be presented by the nearest male relative, who should be either the eldest son or his heir. Should the eldest son die without issue and his brothers have sons, one of their sons is appointed his heir, and succeeds both to his estates and to his filial duties. He may be a mere infant in arms, but at the sacred rites of Ancestral Worship he must be present as Master of Ceremonies. The main duties which thus devolve upon him are—oft-repeated acts of worship at the tombs, and also before the ancestral tablets, which represent the dead of many generations, and which are gathered together in a great hall. Sometimes he has duplicate tablets in his own home. At each of these he must make offerings of material objects, to be spiritualised by fire, for the use and comfort of the dead.

Every man is supposed to have three souls, one of which at death goes forth into the world of darkness to undergo trial and punishment at the hands of the judicial gods of Purgatory. The second soul remains with the corpse in the tomb, while the third watches over the tablet which bears its name in the Ancestral Hall. Every large family has its own Ancestral Hall, quite apart from the family tombs. All round this hall are ranged shelves, on which stand rows of these tablets, representing many departed generations. They are all much alike, from the tablet of the Emperor to that of the poor student, consisting simply of a narrow upright wooden slab, on which are inscribed the name and the honourable titles of the dead—the said slab being mounted in a richly carved stand.

Friends who desire to comfort their dead must therefore make separate offerings on behalf of each of his three souls—so they must by turns visit the grave, the Ancestral Hall, and the temple of Cheng Hwang, the deity into whose jurisdiction the soul has passed.

No one can be long in China before he discovers that Ancestral Worship is the keystone of all existence in the Celestial Empire. It permeates all life, affecting even the most trivial details of every-day existence, and is an influence tenfold more potent for keeping the people in the bondage of gross superstition than all the countless idols of the land, inasmuch as it compels every man to be for ever looking backward instead of forward, in fear lest he should by any action offend his very exacting ancestral spirits. In short, from his birth to his grave, the chief aim and end of every Chinaman is this constant propitiation of the dead.

It has been well described as a most degrading slavery—the

slavery of the living to the dead—a system of worship and sacrifices which must be offered ceaselessly, not necessarily from love to the departed, but in order to avert calamity should their displeasure be incurred by any neglect or departure from ancient custom. It is a system of fear which controls every act of life and all social organisation, affecting alike the Imperial throne and the meanest coolie—in short, it is this system which has fossilised this vast empire, and holds all China's millions frozen in its icy grasp.

No matter what other religion he professes—Buddhist, Taouist, Confucian—every Chinaman's first duty is the care of sacrificing to his ancestors. This was the primitive religion of the land, and from it were derived the systems both of Taou and Confucius. Sacrifices were offered to deceased sages and shades of ancestors in pre-Confucian times, and the great philosopher himself taught that the dead must thus be honoured as though actually living. So it was only natural that the year after Confucius died, a funeral temple should have been erected to his honour, in which were buried his musical instruments, his boots, and articles of dress which he had worn.

By Imperial command sacrifices were offered to him, as they continue to be to this present day, in temples without number. I have already noted[1] that the most distinguished sages of the Celestial Empire are honoured by having their monumental tablets ranged on either side of that of their Great Master, and receive a due share of reverence. But I doubt whether the term monumental correctly describes these tablets, for their name, "Shinwei," means "the place of the soul," suggesting the actual presence of one of the three souls. Considering that every city in China has a Confucian temple, the souls must be capable of infinite multiplication!

The great sage inculcated filial reverence as the primary obligation of mankind, and rigidly do the majority of his disciples obey his teaching, though others seem to consider that the practice of filial duty is only required after parents are dead. But no matter how bad a son may have been from his boyhood till the hour when his parents die—from that time forth his whole anxiety centres in appeasing their anger by such prayers and offerings as shall ensure their comfortable reception in the Spirit-World—not for their sakes, but for his own, lest by any means they should return to torment him, accompanied by a multitude of spirits more vicious than them-

[1] See chap. ix.

selves. For the dead are mighty, and will jealously avenge the smallest omission in the accustomed ritual in their honour. Thus the undutiful son is at once transformed into a most punctilious observer of every religious form required in ancestral worship.

For this reason, it is of the utmost importance to every Chinaman to leave a son, whose duty it shall be to offer the oft-repeated sacrifices which ensure his comfort in the Spirit-World. Sooner than leave no son to fulfil this obligation, he will, if possible, adopt one; otherwise his hungry spirit will be dependent on getting a share of the offerings which, three times a year, are made by the charitable public for the benefit of the destitute dead. It is, of course, necessary that the person thus adopted to perform the filial rites should be younger than the supposed father, and even where the interests of the Empire are jeopardised by a slavish obedience to this rule, it is none the less rigidly adhered to.

This was strikingly exemplified when, on the early death of Tung Chi, the late Emperor of China, who died without issue, it became necessary to select his successor to the vacant throne. In the interests of the Empire it would have appeared desirable that this honour should be conferred on some experienced and able statesman, selected from the numerous adult princes. To this course, however, there was one insuperable objection, fully recognised by all concerned, namely, that the new Emperor must necessarily be junior to the deceased, as otherwise he could not have offered the necessary ancestral worship.

The only person capable of fulfiling this condition was a boy under four years of age, who was accordingly solemnly crowned Emperor, under the title of Kwang Sü, and the affairs of the Empire were once more committed to the care of the two Empress Dowagers, during a second long minority. But it was not enough thus to secure tranquillity for the soul of Tung Chi. His death without issue had left his father, Hien Fung, without an heir on earth to provide for his necessities. In order to avert the terrible consequences that might ensue were the father's interests neglected, the infant Emperor was officially constituted heir to Hien Fung, with the promise to the spirits that his first-born son should be the especial heir of Tung Chi—a decided case of counting unhatched chickens!

I doubt whether the whole record of earthly worship can produce a more remarkable scene than that when, on his accession to the Imperial throne, a newly crowned Emperor—the Son of Heaven—goes in solemn state to the roofless Temple of Heaven

at Peking, there to offer sacrifice in his character of High Priest, and formally to announce to the Celestial Rulers the new titles and dignities assumed by him, as their Filial Descendant. The announcement thus made to heaven is also conveyed to the deceased Emperors, who (besides receiving worship and offerings in other temples specially dedicated to them) are even here exalted to a position only second to that of the Supreme Being. As the idea of sacrifice is that of a banquet, and a banquet involves the presence of honoured guests, the Emperors formally invite their Imperial ancestors to come and share the feast with Shang-te, the Almighty, who thus receives honour by the act of filial piety, which pays the highest conceivable homage to parents.[1]

Equally remarkable are the ceremonials of the Imperial worship in the Tri-meaou or "Great Temple" at Peking, known to foreigners as the Temple of the Imperial Ancestors, which lies on the south-east of the principal gate of the Emperor's palace—that is to say, in the most honourable situation possible. In its chief hall are ranged the Imperial tablets of the last ten generations, Emperors and Empresses being arranged in pairs, all facing the south. In secondary halls are stored the tablets of numerous persons of such distinguished merit as to entitle them to be spiritual guests at the sacrificial banquets. Imperial relatives occupy the eastern hall, and loyal officers the western. As the tablets face the south, the east lies on the left hand, which is the post of highest honour.

A complete set of offerings are presented before each Imperial pair. Husband and wife each receive three cups of wine, two bowls of soup, and a table and stool on which are laid suitable clothing. The Emperor, however, receives two pieces of silk, and the poor Empress gets none. She, however, receives an equal share in some other pieces of silk, which are laid together with incense and lighted candles, the carcass of a pig, a cow, and a sheep, and twenty-eight dishes, all of which are duly set in rows before the tablets of each Imperial couple. Hence there is apparently no objection to a wife sharing her husband's meal in the spirit-land, though she could not possibly do so on earth.

Then the Emperor on his knees addresses prayer by name to each of these, his deceased predecessors, both Emperors and Empresses (whose titles in each case number from twelve to twenty words), craving their acceptance of these expressions of unforget-

[1] I am greatly indebted for details respecting Ancestral Worship to Dr M. T. Yates, of the Southern American Baptist Mission, and for these concerning Imperial Worship to Dr Edkins, of Peking.

ting thoughtfulness on the part of "their filial descendant, the Emperor." This prayer is inscribed on a yellow tablet. The musicians and choir then chant songs of praise, while the Emperor presents the pieces of silk for the adornment of his ancestors. The silk and the prayer-tablet are burnt together in a brazier in the eastern court of the temple. The silk and other offerings to meritorious officers are burnt in the western court.

Then follows a very remarkable sacramental service which appears to be a distinguishing feature of all the great ceremonials at which the Emperor is himself the High Priest—namely, the solemn receiving, on low bended knee, of "the Cup of Blessing," and "the Meat of Blessing." On this occasion, *after the Emperor and his nobles have partaken of the sacred elements, the officer in charge of "the Blessed Wine" places a cup before each of the tablets, representing the Imperial ancestors, both male and female, that all may share in this communion of the dead.*

In the course of this solemn service the Emperor is required to kneel sixteen times, and *to knock his forehead on the ground no less than thirty-six times!* All his nobles are required to do likewise. This is intended to show the exceeding importance of every act of filial piety, and to prove that the Emperor is indeed an example of virtue to all his people.

Besides this great National Temple, there is another Imperial Ancestral Temple within the precincts of the palace at Peking, and also a temple at the tomb of each Emperor. But every family of any importance has its own ancestral hall, wherein are stored the tablets commemorating all their dead; and the whole country is thickly strewn with temples to the honour of sages, saints, or heroes, all of whom are honoured in much the same way.

The most casual visitor to China cannot fail to note the multitude of temples of this class, even should he pass unawares by the "family mausoleums." But those who dwell in the land very quickly become aware how mighty and real an influence this ancestral worship exerts in every direction.

However Chinamen may differ on other matters, such as systems of religion, social position, dialect, &c., this is the one point on which all the four hundred millions are agreed—it is the one faith which all alike hold in awe and reverence, and which is indelibly impressed on their minds from their earliest infancy. It takes precedence of everything. The man who holds the most important Government office is not only excused for its neglect, if he can show that he was engaged in some ceremonial connected with his

ancestral duties, but should one of his parents die while he is in office, he is actually *obliged* to retire from public life for a period of many months—no matter how critical may be the public interests thus sacrificed to an iron custom!

Thus a man holding office in the extreme south of China, having left an aged grandmother in the extreme north of the Empire, is liable at any moment to receive tidings of her death, accompanied by the Imperial order to attend her obsequies, and to remain mourning in seclusion for a hundred days. Should he be a man whose dignity requires the attendance of a large retinue, the mere item of his travelling expenses is apt to be serious. A Viceroy of Canton who was thus summoned to Peking to mourn for his grandmother, chartered a special steamer at a cost of 10,000 dollars to convey him and his suite to Taku. He suffered so terribly from sea-sickness, however, ere reaching Shanghai, that he actually disembarked there, and performed the journey by land, sending only his baggage by the specially chartered steamer. It is to be hoped the grandmother appreciated the honour done to her!

But so great is the difference between the ceremonial mourning required by an ancestor or a descendant, that the man who must go to all this trouble on the death of his grandmother, need not even wear mourning for his daughter (certainly not if she was married), nor does he in any way interrupt his official work. I have been told of a Government official whose married daughter died in his house, but he attended his *Yamun* the same day just as usual!

So entirely is the duty of the living to previous generations recognised as a national interest, that even judicial decisions are controlled by this strange faith. When a man is found guilty of a crime worthy of severe punishment, the magistrate, ere passing sentence, inquires whether the parents of the culprit are living—how long it is since they died—whether he has any brothers, and if so, whether he is an elder or a younger son. Should it be found that he is an elder or only son, and that either parent has died recently, his sentence will be very much lighter than it would otherwise be, as no magistrate would willingly incur the responsibility of subjecting a man to such imprisonment as would compel him to neglect these sacred duties.

The judge whose duty it is to pass sentence of death on a criminal, must nerve himself to face whatever evil may be stirred up by his vengeful spirit (probably he will make large offerings and apologies to the dead). But the fact of his having held this office

precludes him from all chance of ever being raised to the high dignity of Prime Minister, as it is deemed unsafe to intrust such an office to one against whom any in the spirit-world may be supposed to desire vengeance, which might be accomplished by bringing calamity on his public work.

As even the highest lines of political life are thus influenced by the belief in this all-pervading presence of the malignant dead, still more largely does it affect every individual existence. Most of the sorrows of domestic life in China are traced to this source. The selfish anxiety to secure ministering descendants as early as possible leads to betrothals in extreme youth, which constantly result in lifelong misery. The little bride may prove childless, and the necessity of securing male heirs leads to polygamy, the fruitful source of domestic heart-burnings and quarrels.

Sometimes, however, it is the sonless wife who, like Sarah of old, claims her right to obtain a son by her handmaid, or, at least, by a secondary wife. This Chinese custom is occasionally the source of trouble among the converts, in the case where a man has declared himself a Christian, and his wife continues heathen. He himself may be the essence of fidelity, but when his wife persistently urges her claim to the services of Hagar, the husband is apt to concede the point, and then realises too late that Christianity admits of no Ishmaels, and that the modern Abraham is excommunicated as a bigamist.

To the claims of ancestral worship is also due the lamentation which too often greets the birth of a baby girl, whereas the birth of a son is the occasion of the utmost rejoicing. Thus it is that ancestor-worship lies at the root of the appalling female infanticide of China, a practice about which there is no concealment, being fully sanctioned by public opinion. (But even a male child which dies from natural causes at a very early age is not considered worth propitiating by funeral expenses, so the poor little body is disposed of with scanty reverence. Its parents do not follow it to the grave—at least not in North China—lest this should prove a bad precedent, and others should also die. For the same reason the body must not be carried out by the door, but must be handed over the wall to a coolie, who undertakes to carry it to one of the baby-towers which are built as receptacles for such corpses, outside the city wall: he is accompanied by a servant, who goes to see that he does not dispose of his burden in the first open drain !)

As a matter of course, this whole system is the greatest bar that could by any possibility be devised to check the adoption of

Christianity. The Chinaman who confesses himself a Christian, and refuses to perform the accustomed acts of ancestral worship, thereby consigns all his ancestors for the five previous generations [1] to a state of perpetual beggary. He brings on himself the curse, not only of all the living—*i.e.*, all his kinsmen, friends, and neighbours—but of all the omnipotent dead whom he is most bound to revere and to provide for, and whose curse it must be terrible indeed to incur.

Perhaps he himself may have so far realised the teaching of Christianity as to be convinced that his dead ancestors require no aid from him; still it is hard to say so, to be misjudged and scouted by all his fellows, condemned by all his superiors, and, worst of all, subject to the blame, the entreaties, the tears of all his women-folk—his mother and his wives—to say nothing of his "sisters, and his cousins, and his aunts," all with one accord pleading for the unhappy dead.

Worse still, there are not lacking instances in which parents have come to a son whom they knew to be halting between two opinions, and have deliberately informed him that, should he so disgrace the family as to become a Christian, they would at once commit suicide. You see, by becoming a Christian he would unfit himself for the performance of his duties as their heir, and become practically as useless as if he had been a girl. Consequently, as his life was not worth preserving, they would at least take their vengeance; and, according to Chinese law, the man who by his misdeeds drives his parents to kill themselves, is a malefactor worthy of the worst form of death—namely, decapitation, which is not only the direst disgrace which can be inflicted on a man in presence of his fellows, but also ensures his signal punishment in the next world, where headless spirits receive very small pity, for their appearing there in such a plight is a certain proof that the newly deceased has been ignominiously despatched from earth, and is consequently quite unworthy of respect in his new state. Thus are the ancestors avenged on their unworthy descendant!

This belief in the far-reaching consequences of decapitation was

[1] It is at least fortunate for the living that the requisite provision for ancestors is limited to five generations, inasmuch as the law of geometrical progression, when applied to genealogy, shows that as every person now living must about one hundred years ago have possessed eight great-grandparents, he has only to carry back his calculation for eight hundred years to discover that *he is the lineal descendant of sixteen million ancestors!* It is supposed that all the Saxons, Normans, Danes, Frisians, and Celts inhabiting England, France, and Scandinavia in the time of William the Conqueror, scarcely exceeded this figure. Under these circumstances, our individual pride of blue blood and pure race seems somewhat of a farce!

curiously exemplified during the Chinese rebellion, when wealthy men, whose friends had been thus executed, craved permission to purchase their heads, that they might stitch them on to the dead bodies, hoping thus to deceive the officials in the spirit-world. Sums of upwards of six hundred dollars were thus paid by officers of the Imperial army for the recovery of a single head. But while thus careful for the welfare of their own dead, the same belief enabled these barbarians to intensify the horrors of defeat, and carry their vengeance into the future life, by decapitating every rebel corpse, even breaking open the coffins of their dead in order thus to insult the poor skeletons, whose solid "longevity boards" were then utilised in repairing the wooden pavement of the streets.

So terrible is the suffering thus entailed on the poor disembodied spirit that there have been cases in which officials, charged with the execution of this sentence on some person of rank, have been so far moved to mercy as to connive at his suicide by inhaling gold-leaf, or some such strictly respectable method of entering the world of spirits.

I am not sure if the benefits of propitiating ancestors ever rise above a negative prevention of evil, the object being to avert the ill-will which they are supposed to bear to the descendants who in any way fail to provide for them. Consequently should one of the family fall ill, the relations immediately offer sacrifice and worship before the tablets of their ancestors, deeming it probable that the illness is the punishment for some omission of duty. Should the sufferer fail to recover quickly, a wise woman or spirit-medium is summoned to tell them whether the offended spirit is one of their own ancestors, or some poor beggar-spirit which, having been neglected in the distribution of general charity, takes this means of compelling attention to its necessities.

Should the spirit's interpreter trace the illness to the displeasure of a family ancestor, large quantities of paper money are immediately burnt before the ancestral tablets. But if the mischief has been caused by a discontented beggar-spirit, the offering is burnt outside the door. Should this fail to bring relief to the sufferer, the priests are called in to exorcise the spirits and guard the doors that they may not enter again. If the sick man becomes delirious, it is supposed that a demon-spirit has carried off one of his souls, whereupon some member of the family goes out, carrying a lantern to light the spirit back, and luring it to return by a peculiar anxious cry.

When a person is lying at the point of death, his (or her) very

best clothes are laid out on the bed, and after his friends have washed him with warm water in which aromatic leaves have been boiled, he is dressed from head to foot, in order that he may appear in the spirit-world to the very best advantage. Should he unfortunately die before being thus dressed, it is necessary to call in the aid of a very low caste called the Ng 'Tsock, whose position is so degraded that they are prohibited from worshipping in public temples, and who cannot be made more unclean even by touching a corpse. These, therefore, are summoned to wash and dress the dead, while the relations kneel around.

Of the importance attached to this last change of raiment, we have touching proof in a letter addressed, just before his death, by the Viceroy of Kwang-si to the Emperor, giving up the seals of office. He bemoans that having commanded his Majesty's forces for several months, he had failed to subdue the Taiping rebellion. This failure, he says, "shows my want of fidelity: my not being able to support my aged mother shows my want of filial piety. After that I your servant am dead, I have ordered my son Kae to *bury me in common clothes as an indication of my fault.*"

The dressing having been accomplished, certain things are placed in the mouth of the corpse: these vary with his rank. A mandarin of the highest grade is provided with a piece of gold, a piece of silver, a bit of jade, a pearl, and a precious stone—a very good mouthful! On the next four ranks are bestowed small jade ornaments and a bit of gold; still descending in the scale, the jade is omitted, and small pieces of gold and silver suffice. Still smaller folk are entitled to three bits of silver, one bit of silver, down to three copper cash or three sorts of grain.

When a man dies, the first care of his friends is to place at the door of the house a cup of cold water—a custom for which no satisfactory reason is assigned. Then a suit of really good clothes must be burnt, together with most of the dead man's wardrobe—his boots and shoes, bed and bedding, horses and houses, sedan-chair, opium-pipe, melon seeds, and any other luxuries or necessaries which he appreciated in this world, for all these things will be equally necessary in the spirit-world, where they cannot be obtained, though they can so easily be transmitted thither by the simple process of burning them. So the newly-arrived dead is absolutely dependent on his male heir for all these things; and his reception in the spirit-world will be considerably better if he arrives well clothed, than it would be should he appear in beggarly want.

Many and great are the expenses to which a family is subjected

through the death of one member. Not only, as we have seen, must they immediately burn all his best clothes (as it is understood that genuine articles should be sacrificed for his original outfit, though paper representations are equally efficacious later), but it is deemed important that all funeral arrangements should be the very best that can be provided, and the survivors often impoverish themselves for years to provide what is considered a decent burial. The corpse must be arrayed in new clothes, with a cap and satin boots (such a dress as the deceased would have hired for the day had he been going to attend a feast).

As to the coffin, the price of which may range from £5 to £500, it is essential that it should be as solid and expensive as possible. But these are often provided beforehand, for dutiful sons will stint themselves for years in order to present their parents on their sixty-first birthday with really handsome coffins—cheerful birthday presents, which thenceforth form part of the household furniture; and should the family have occasion to "flit," the ponderous boards are carried with them, no matter at what inconvenience.

In the hill districts you may chance to meet some great official on the march. The ladies of his zenana are carefully stowed away in covered chairs, and this domestic procession is completed by a small caravan of mules laden with "longevity boards," ready for all emergencies! So essential is the provision of a good coffin, that the Chinese form of insurance, instead of having reference to the comfort of old age, goes to entitle the subscriber to a coffin and grave-clothes. To secure this he must for sixteen years be a member of a "Long Life Loan Company," his annual subscription being something less than a shilling. Benevolent persons present coffins to the temples for the use of the very poor.

The adoption of Christianity nowise lessens the pleasure of being well provided in this respect, any more than it lessens the satisfaction of a good Scotch housewife of the old school in the winding-sheets so carefully stored for her own last sleep and that of her gudeman. There is at this moment a dear old Chinese grannie living in refuge at the English Mission here, having been rejected by all her kindred, save one daughter, on account of her earnest acceptance of Christ. The daughter earns three dollars a-week, which keeps them both, and the old lady is quite happy in the possession of a good coffin wherein to leave her poor old soul-case when the glad summons "Home" shall come at last.

Of course in this, as in all other tropical or semi-tropical countries, funeral arrangements have to be made pretty rapidly when

the moment of death does come, so it is well to be prepared. Within the coffin is placed a layer of lime on which the head is laid, and above him is spread a shroud of white silk. Supposing him to be a wealthy person, several coverings are added, which, although each lined with white silk in token of mourning, are of brilliant colours, varying with the rank of the deceased, bright red betokening the three highest grades, dark red, green, purple, ash-colour, and white denoting the descending scale.

Noblemen of the five highest grades are entitled to have their coffins coated with red lacquer, and the highest of all, answering to our dukes, may further decorate them with a pattern of golden flowers. Similar sumptuary laws regulate every detail of funeral, as of all other ceremonial customs.

The precise number of sheep to be sacrificed, of tables of offerings to be spread, and the sums of sham money to be burnt, are clearly laid down for persons of every shade of rank. So also is the precise amount of land which each may cover with his monument, and the height and thickness of stone slabs to be used (all of which are calculated by multiples of 9). The tomb of a great man may cover a radius of 90 feet from a given point; a small man may not exceed a radius of 9. A ducal slab is 36 inches wide and 90 inches high. The stone figures and stone animals which guard the approach are also strictly apportioned to such only as are entitled to such honour.

The absence of ill-omened black from a Chinese funeral, with the exception of the coating of black lacquer on the coffins of minor mandarins, takes from it all the sombre gloom which we associate with such. Sometimes the hearse or bier is canopied with scarlet silk, and decorated with much gilding, while the men who bear it (often a large company) are perhaps dressed in green, with spots of bright colours. In the house of the deceased a streamer of dark crimson, floating from a bamboo, is placed near the tablet of the deceased, and on it his various titles are written in letters of gold. Friends send gifts of blue or white satin banners, with adulatory sentences concerning the dead, also in golden characters. In the case of wealthy folk all these banners are very large and handsome, and, being ranged round the walls, produce quite a gaily decorative effect.

In the first agonies of grief, visiting-cards of plain white paper are used in place of the ordinary large crimson cards. After a while salmon-coloured cards are substituted, on which the mourner is described as "the man in dutiful grief." When he enters on

the third year of filial mourning the red cards are resumed, but marked with a character descriptive of mitigated affliction. Any letters written during this period must be upon white paper, in token of mourning, the envelope being enfolded in a strip of pale pink or buff-coloured paper.

Amongst other symptoms of mourning, a mandarin removes the button from his hat (or if he chance to be an Imperial prince he removes his crimson silken knot), no decoration of any sort being worn except the tassel, and the ordinary red tassel is replaced by a white one. If he is a rider, he covers his saddle with white.

The front of the head is left unshorn, producing a very untidy appearance. In the case of mourning for the Emperor, no head-shaving is allowed for a hundred days—only the combing and plaiting of tails. In truth, the death of an Emperor weighs seriously on the domestic arrangements of the people. For one thing, no marriage may be contracted for twenty-seven months from the ill-fated day, the penalty for disobedience being decapitation—the most ignominious of all forms of execution in Chinese estimation.

Ere the deceased is concealed from the sight of his friends, he lies in state with a fan in one hand, and in the other a strip of paper with a prayer inscribed on it. Thus he remains for several days, during which the relations feast and mourn by turns, musicians play shrill music on discordant pipes, and the priests do "joss-pigeon," the low class Ng 'Tsock having previously scared all evil spirits from the room by violently beating the floor at each corner with a large hammer.

Beneath the coffin, which stands on trestles, is set a lamp, which is kept burning day and night to give light to the soul (one of the three) which remains beside the corpse. The oil in the lamp is constantly replenished by the chief mourner. If the deceased has a wife and family, all absent members are summoned to the house, where they must on arriving creep about on all fours. Chairs and beds are prohibited luxuries for the first seven days. The family must sit on the floor, and sleep on mats spread near the coffin. No cooking may be done in the house, so the mourners are dependent on the voluntary contributions of their neighbours, and whatever is sent to them must be eaten with their fingers, as the intensity of their grief does not allow of using chop-sticks.

The amount of merely physical distress involved by the death of a parent is truly serious. Thus a great man announces the death of his father, by sending to each of his friends an enormous card (really a sheet of paper) about a yard and a half long and broad

in proportion, whereon he states that he and all his relatives and descendants are on their knees before the coffin, beating their heads upon the ground and weeping tears of blood; smaller people send out similar invitations on light-brown paper, in an envelope of the same; certain days are named on which (on presentation of this card) friends who wish to mourn (*i.e.*, to pay a visit of condolence) will be admitted. They are received by the unfortunate chief mourner crouching on his hands and knees, sobbing, weeping, and groaning, and then relapsing into howls. This sort of thing is resumed as often as any friend happens to call in the course of the hundred days of filial mourning!

When it becomes positively necessary to close the coffin, its edges are closely cemented with mortar, and, unless the funeral is to occur immediately, the coffin is varnished and deposited in a place of honour, either in the home itself or in one of the small houses built for this purpose near the cemeteries. Thus it may lie for years awaiting a lucky hour for burial, and night and morning dutiful hands must burn incense to the spirit of the dead; and at all festivals, paper money and clothes must also be burnt, and the priests must receive large offerings, in order that by the fervour of their prayers the soul may be delivered from the Buddhist Purgatory and enter the rest of Paradise.

At the end of the aforesaid hundred days, the tablet of the dead is placed upon the ancestral altar, and the dutiful son reasons with his parent, and points out that as the body which he formerly inhabited has now been dead for one hundred days, it is full time that he should take his place amongst the other ancestors. Then all present do homage to the tablet, and make a sacred bonfire of their deep mourning clothes. They now assume blue instead of white—clothes, shoes, and hair-ties being all blue.

A provident Chinaman is not content with superintending the making of his own coffin. He also endeavours during his lifetime to secure a last resting-place for himself and each member of his family. So a geomancer is employed at a high rate of pay to fix upon a lucky site for the grave, or as a Chinaman would say, to ascertain at what spot the *feng-shui* is most favourable. When this has been decided, the piece of land is bought, vaults are prepared, and a mound in the shape of a horse-shoe is erected above each grave. Hence many of those which we see await persons who are still living. It is of the utmost importance to secure a spot well shielded from the baneful, blighting influences of the north, but fully exposed to all sweet influences from the south. Such a

grave is so well pleasing to the dead, that the prosperity of the living holding such ground is almost assured.

But it does not follow that the dead will at once be carried to his rest in this nicely prepared grave. The priests and the *feng-shui* professors do not allow their prey to escape so easily. The professor, whose long experience cannot be questioned, declares that the influences of air and water are unfavourable, so the coffin must be temporarily deposited in the nearest City of the Dead—strange resting-places, which, I believe, have a place in all Chinese towns.

At Canton I spent a long day in the City of the Dead, wandering in the great wilderness of nameless graves.[1] Here, in Foo-Chow, there is a similar city, though on somewhat a smaller scale. It lies in the grassy valley at the foot of this green hill. In each case I entered a walled enclosure, and, passing by a temple with gilded images at the gate, found myself in a labyrinth of streets, arranged just as in a city of the living—streets of small houses, in each of which from one to three ponderous coffins are deposited, there to wait for months—perhaps for many years—till the geomancers declare the *feng-shui* to be favourable.

A large screen is set between the coffins and the door, doubtless to check the travelling propensities of the dead, who, as we have seen, are supposed to have a fancy for moving in straight lines, and object to going round a corner.

For all these houses a monthly rent is paid. Sometimes, after this has continued for many years, and still the *feng-shui* professor forbids burial, the survivors grow weary, and stop payment. Then the coffins are removed to a suburb of wretched outhouses, there to await permission from the authorities for burial somewhere on the barren hills which form the vast cemetery, all dotted with countless graves of the nameless dead. Even these wretched huts, to which the unremunerative coffins are banished, are precious to some of the living—miserable beggars who creep here at night to find sleeping quarters beside the dead.

In the City of the Dead each little house contains an altar, with very cheap altar-vases of the coarsest green pottery. Large silk or paper fruits and lanterns hang from the roof, and life-sized paper figures guard the four corners of each room. In some there are really gorgeous scarlet and gold state umbrellas, but all are of pasteboard, so that there is nothing to tempt thieves to break into this Silent City, or to molest the fine old Buddhist priest who remains in charge of the place.

[1] See chap. iii.

Ere the coffin is carried to this place of waiting, the priests come to perform a funeral service in the house of the deceased, which (in the case of a wealthy man) is all draped with unbleached cotton—curtains of the same hanging before the doors. The widows and other chief mourners wear sackcloth, with a head-dress of the same, whilst other relatives wear unbleached cotton, white cloth shoes, and the men have their plaits tied with white cotton braid. On the coffin rests an ornamental shrine containing the tablets of the deceased. In front of the coffin is placed a screen similar to those in the houses in the Cities of the Dead, which are supposed to check roving spirits. Before this is set a long table laden with lighted candles, incense-sticks, offerings of food, dishes of sweetmeats and preserved fruits, heaped in pyramids. On other tables are arranged perhaps thirty bowls of all manner of meats and an incense-burner.

Half-a-dozen priests, some in yellow and some in black robes, chant prayers, while one periodically rings a small bell, and another incessantly beats a skull-shaped drum. Meanwhile a company of musicians keep up an intolerable din on divers unmusical instruments, and the women wail at intervals. The mourners make obeisance to the ancestral tablet, and burn incense-sticks before it.

If the dead has been of such rank as to entitle him to such honour in the world to come, a whole company of life-sized figures, representing mandarin attendants, are ranged in the outer court, some bearing the large scarlet umbrellas which invariably figure in the processions of great men. A cardboard horse and a fine model of a house are probably among the useful objects which swell the bonfire, whose flames waft both attendants and goods to the land whither the dead has passed. Such a house may be about 10 feet in height, and has a frontage of 12 feet or more. It contains reception-rooms, sleeping-rooms, and halls, and is furnished with pasteboard tables and chairs, whereon are seated pasteboard models of the dead and his attendants. His boat and boatmen, his sedan-chair and bearers, are all ranged round this house, which would be a source of endless delight to English children as the perfection of a doll-house. The priests sprinkle rice and wheat on the roof, and then with much bell-ringing and ceremony they set fire to the whole concern.

For forty-nine days the mourning continues, and on every seventh day the women of the family assemble to wail piteously, while they rehearse all the merits of the deceased. About a fortnight after death the spirit is supposed to return to his old house;

but instead of coming quietly, just to visit his relations in a peaceable fashion, he is invariably escorted by a host of other spirits, who are exceedingly unwelcome to the living. Of course the priests—either Taouist or Buddhist—are called in to exorcise the dead man's new friends and drive them from the house. So for three days and three nights a grand ceremonial is kept up.

The principal room in the house is stripped of its ordinary furniture, and is decorated with rich ecclesiastical hangings, embroidered with various symbols, of which the spirits are supposed to stand greatly in awe. In the centre of this room the ancestral tablet is placed on a raised table, and all the relatives and friends of the family assemble to worship before it, seeking by most humble confession and humiliation to appease any anger which the deceased may feel towards them, and promising every sort of good deed in time to come.

Meanwhile five, seven, or nine priests, in gorgeous vestments, march round the prostrate worshippers, chanting and bowing, and ringing their small bells.

In a vacant room a table is set, loaded with good things, and with chop-sticks placed all round it. When the family party are about to feed, the chief priest enters this room, and waving his staff of office, pronounces an incantation, and invites the spirits to come and eat, but desires them to do no mischief. When, on the third day, the ceremonies are concluded, he repeats his incantations, and pointing to the north, south, east, and west, commands all the spirits to depart, and on no account to presume to disturb the peace of the family. As this injunction is accompanied by much beating of gongs and a grand discharge of fire-crackers, the spirit-guests are so much alarmed that they forthwith take flight, and the grateful family have to pay a very large bill for this priestly deliverance from their unseen foes. These days of mourning often involve an expenditure of many thousands of dollars!

But their expenses are by no means to end with the seven times seven days. On the contrary, so long as there is a chance of extorting money from the survivors, so long will the well-known oriental custom of "squeeze" be carried on, therefore the power of mitigating purgatorial pains is next brought into play.

It is supposed that life in the invisible World of Darkness is a counterpart of that in this earthly World of Light. Every condition of life on earth is there reproduced. From the Emperor down to the smallest official each grade is represented, and the man who dies while holding any Government rank receives similar standing

in the spirit-world. His wife also retains her honoured position. Hence, on the death of such an one, all the municipal authorities must of necessity go to worship at her tomb on certain days. The learned man who holds a literary degree is credited with the same in his new abode, and is entitled to the same relative respect as would be due to his rank on earth. (Considering that many students go up for examination again and again, year after year, till they die of sheer old age and hard mental work, it is satisfactory to know that their hardly-earned honours do not end with this short life!)

These are the happy and distinguished few. The mass of men pass away to become "spirits in prison," subject to all the pains and persecutions which the Chinese have such good cause to associate with confinement in their own most horrible prisons. From the moment of death the spirit is supposed to be at the mercy of beings answering to the very venal police and prison authorities of earth. These accordingly must be bribed freely to induce them to show mercy to the captives, and they include a whole army of detectives, attendants, door-keepers, messengers, and executioners.

The latter carry out the decrees of the gods, and the punishments awarded to evil-doers are only intensified editions of the tortures practised on the living in Chinese courts of justice. In several Chinese temples I have seen a hall set apart to represent the torments of the ten Buddhist hells, and more repulsive chambers of horror could not possibly be conceived. The penalties assigned for every form of sin are there exemplified by groups of dolls supposed to be human culprits undergoing every form of torture which the ingenuity of devils could devise. Some are being sawn asunder, having first been bound between two planks —others are thrown into a rice-pounding mill and crushed, men are crucified, women torn to pieces by devils. Some are devoured by hideous and repulsive reptiles, others are thrown into caldrons of boiling oil.

There is no known crime for which a special torture has not been here devised. Priests who have decoyed boys from their homes to bring them up as monks, are frozen in ice-ponds. Suicides are tormented with unquenchable thirst and gnawing hunger, and an ever-recurring consciousness of the agony of mind which led to their self-destruction (and yet some suicides are greatly honoured!) Fraudulent trustees are suffocated in black sand-clouds. Unfaithful wives, undutiful children, false soothsayers, scribes who have undertaken to write letters for the ignorant and

have deceived them, persons who have failed to make way in the street for the blind or the aged, sacrilegious thieves who have scraped the gilding off idols, men who have printed bad books or painted wicked pictures, men who have sown discord in families—these and a thousand other evil-doers have their exact penalty duly apportioned.

From the summit of a high pagoda they are compelled ("as Sorrow's Crown of Sorrow") to look back at the happy scenes of their early innocence, and there behold in a mirror the semblance of the loathsome reptiles whose forms they must assume on returning to earth after long ages of torment, such as being incessantly devoured by wild beasts, torn by red-hot pincers, plunged in pools of blood, having their tongues torn out, and any other pleasant pastime which can be devised by malevolent imps. There are devils with pitchforks to encourage such as shrink from the very material sea of fire, and the whole hideous scene is overlooked by a gigantic and most repulsive image, with blood streaming from eyes and nostrils, who is ever on the watch to seize the souls of the dying.

Knowing, as we do, how many a poor Irish family will starve themselves sooner than fail to pay for the Masses whereby the priests promise to obtain the liberation from Purgatory of some loved friend, we need scarcely wonder that with such representations as these to stimulate the sympathies of the living, the Chinese priests, whether Taouist or Buddhist, herein find a most profitable source of revenue. For though it is considered to be almost a matter of course that the dead should have to undergo a considerable period of purification in Purgatory, their pains may be greatly modified and shortened by the generous offerings of their descendants; and well do the priests know that should the male relations incline to economy in this matter, they can extract large monies by working on the sympathy and affection of the women.

Consequently it is on the influence of the wives and mothers of China that the priests chiefly rely for the maintenance of their lucrative trade in purgatorial pains, and until foreign ladies can acquire such influence with Chinese ladies as shall emancipate their minds from this priestly thraldom, the work of spreading Christianity in China will necessarily be slow, and its difficulties wellnigh insuperable.

Naturally this heartless trade is most successfully plied while the family are still in the first depths of woe. Probably ere long

it will be revealed to some priest (who from his well-known spirituality is certainly deep in the counsels of the purgatorial gods) that the poor dead man is in sore tribulation, and indirect means are found to convey to the widows or mother of the dead the pitiful tidings that their dead deceased is in a deplorable condition in the dark spirit-world, and is likely ere long to be made still more miserable.

The family, greatly moved by this sad revelation, send for the priest, and beg him to investigate the matter, and see what can be done. In due time his reverence reports that undoubtedly the poor man must have been a greater sinner than they supposed, and that he lies bound in a place of torment. The only thing to be done for his relief will be to hold another three days' course of meritorious service, on a more magnificent scale than before, and at a heavier cost.

The family anxiously inquire for what sum they can obtain such a service. The priest having carefully calculated the largest sum he can possibly hope to extract, fixes the sum at (let us say) a thousand tael (the value of the tael fluctuates with the price of silver; it used to be equivalent to about 6s. 8d., now it is only worth about 4s.) The wretched family declare that it is impossible for them to raise such a sum. The priest regrets their inability to do so, but reminds them of the sufferings of their relation. After a family conference they offer him half the sum. This is peremptorily refused. Presently they raise the offer to two-thirds. After much hesitation he agrees to undertake the work for that sum, though he states that it will be far more difficult to accomplish it.

Again the chief room in the house is stripped and decorated with temple hangings. The monumental tablet of the sufferer is placed in the centre of the hall, surrounded by little idols. Day and night a company of priests march slowly and solemnly round and round the tablet, chanting their litanies to an accompaniment of ecclesiastical drums and gongs. Meanwhile many anxious friends assemble, and they and the priests must all be well entertained for several days at the expense of the mourners.

Probably about the evening of the second day, the principal priest present sadly and solemnly announces to all present that, after these endeavours, their poor kinsman is still in the same sad plight, and the authorities in the spirit-world will on no account release him for so small a sum; so that, unless the balance can be raised, all that has been done has been in vain. The afflicted

family again hold conclave. The women are always tender-hearted to the suffering dead, and social custom and fear of the vengeance of the dead compel the men to give in, so if there really is no more money in the house, they go forth to borrow the needful sum, and on their return hand it to the chuckling priests. The incantations are then renewed with far greater energy than before—the bell rings more frequently, the drums are struck incessantly, the weeping family are wrought to a pitch of the highest excitement.

This continues till the third day, when again the abbot, or the chief priest present, inquires of the spirits what causes the delay, and so he ascertains that the poor sufferer has been uplifted to the very brink of the pit, but cannot get out—that he is clinging to the brink in imminent danger, fully discharged by the real judicial authorities, but detained by the officials in charge, who will not let him go till they receive a bribe. This information fully appeals to those who know the customs of Chinese prisons, so the family never doubt its truth, but in frantic grief collect whatever jewels or other treasures they possess, and carrying them to the pawnbroker, contrive to raise the sum required, whereupon the priests once more set to work, and about nightfall announce that the spirit has been released, whereupon a volley of fire-crackers is discharged and gongs are beaten frantically to warn the spirit to flee far away from the horrible prison.

For a while the family are left in peace, but they have no assurance that, should they increase in wealth and become worth a second plucking, they will not be subjected to another revelation from the spirit-world, which custom and public opinion would not suffer them to ignore.

For the dead have no Haven of Rest to which they may attain to be free from danger. There is no Lord of Justice and Mercy in the world beyond the grave. *Theoretically* the Buddhist *may* attain to a blissful Nirvana, but the four hundred millions of China believe practically that the departed roam at large in a realm where devils and demons rule, and where they are as entirely dependent on the gifts of their friends as are the captives in a Chinese prison. Hence the obligation of ancestor-worship.

Certainly a man endowed with much forethought can make some provision for his own future comfort. The priests have considerately organised a bank for the spirit-world. To this the provident may remit large sums during their lifetime, and can draw on the bank as soon as they reach the Dark Country. The priests periodically announce their intention of remitting money on a certain day,

and invite all who have any to deposit or bring it. All who feel doubtful of the generosity of their next heirs, accordingly come and buy from the priests, as much as they can afford, of the tinfoil paper money which is current among the spirits. It is an excellent investment, as for a handful of brass cash, altogether worth about one penny, they will receive sycee—*i.e.*, the boat-shaped blocks of silvery-looking tinfoil, bearing a spiritual value of about thirty dollars! Paper houses, furniture, and clothes may in like manner be purchased and stored beforehand, in the happy security that neither moth nor rust shall corrupt them, neither shall thieves break through and steal.

When the depositor (probably a poor coolie or an aged beggar) has invested his little savings in this precious rubbish in the ecclesiastical bazaar, he delivers it to the priest, together with a sum of real money, as commission. For this the priest gives a written receipt. All this *din* is thrown into a large boat. (It is a framework of reeds, with bamboo mast, and its sails and planking are of paper.) When all the depositors have made their payments, the priests walk several times round the boat, chanting some incantation, then simultaneously set fire to both ends, and the paper fabric vanishes in a flash of flame.

The priests bid the depositors keep their certificates with all care, and give them to some trustworthy person to burn after their decease, whereupon the said certificates will reach them safely in the Dark World, and they can draw their money as required. All this seems to be implicitly believed by these people, who in all other respects are probably the most astute business race in the whole world! Such is the strange power of a grovelling superstition.

Notwithstanding all precautions, the spirit-world does include an incalculable host of miserable beggar-spirits, who have either died in war, or in far countries, or at sea, or of famine, and whose bodies have not been recovered, or who have left no relations to sacrifice to them, or who, having relatives, are nevertheless neglected. All these are wholly dependent on the doles of the charitable, who, three times a-year, contribute large sums, which they invest in *din*—*i.e.*, paper imitations of coins of divers value, especially of sycee (the large boat-shaped blocks of silver money), which are formed for spirit use in paper models covered with tinfoil.

Very curious, indeed, are these oft-recurring propitiatory sacrifices, which are offered in every provincial city throughout the vast empire. Every family in every city must contribute to the fund which, by appeasing the spirits, shall secure the public good. The

idols of the city are brought out in highly decorated sedan-chairs, and attended by a mounted body-guard and a host of officials, and followed by coolies laden with the offerings of the faithful, and by a crowd of penitents—women with dishevelled hair, and men chained and manacled in self-inflicted punishment. These are people who, suffering from some calamity, attribute it to the influence of some unknown spirit, and thus plead for the interposition of the gods.

For several successive nights, priests from all the temples parade the streets with torches and lanterns, displaying the paper money and other offerings suspended from bamboos, and beating gongs with maddening noise, to attract the attention of all the unfed spirits who may be wandering at large in the city, and for whose use a portion of the general offerings are burnt at every street crossing, every road and alley, all along the banks of the rivers or canal, and especially at all the bridges, where rows of lucky red candles are lighted. But the most picturesque feature of this worship is the nocturnal procession of fire-boats on the rivers. At Canton, where this festival is held towards the end of August, certain boats are set apart for this service, and the wealthy citizen who desires to appease the spirits of drowned men, hires a boat and a whole company of priests. Every line of the boat, every rope and mast, is decked with paper lanterns, producing a soft fairy-like effect. While the priests chant their prayers for the dead, they throw blazing paper money and paper clothes into the river, beating gongs to attract the spirits. All around the great boat float lesser ones, each with a blazing fire, to give light to the spirits, that they may not fail to see the offerings. Moreover, small earthenware saucers, containing a little oil and a lighted wick, are set floating on the stream in the wake of the large boat, and add their glimmering rays to the thousand points of reflected light which combine to produce so strange a scene.

Once in ten years a great festival is held in this city for the consolation of the dead. The principal temples are fitted up with rows of booths for the sale of every sort of thing which the dead can be supposed to require—hats and garments, boots and shoes, spectacles and fans, horses and houses, sugar-plums, furniture, and gold and silver money; but above all, opium, with pipes all ready for smoking—these, and many more, all made of paper and cardboard, are devoutly offered to the dead. Amongst these numerous shops, even the pawnbroker and the money-changer are duly represented. In the temple courtyard is placed a terrible image of the

Lord of Hell, and groups of his victims are represented in the act of receiving gifts from the living.

The festival continues seven consecutive days, during which all manner of religious processions parade the streets, and the tall pagodas are illuminated every night. The Buddhists and Taouists unite their forces to make a more showy procession, and the images of Buddha and Laoutsoo, the founders of the two faiths, are carried in highly-decorated chairs, escorted by their respective priests—the Buddhists in their yellow robes, scarlet mantles, and shaven heads; the Taouists in robes of gold-brocaded green satin, with their hair plaited and rolled up, and fastened with a peculiar tortoise-shell comb.

At the close of the festival, all the pasteboard shops and their miscellaneous contents are heaped together to form a vast bonfire, the smoke of which finds its way through the gates of Hell, or rather of Purgatory; and there, I suppose, all the acceptable offerings of the pious donors assume a spiritual form, suited to the requirements of the spirit-world.

In connection with these offerings to propitiate the dead, a very remarkable survival of the primitive Horse-Sacrifice is occasionally practised in divers provinces. Instead, however, of being a sacrifice to the Sun, this is a ceremony for the propitiation of Water-Demons, who are supposed, at the bidding of the neglected dead, to have vented their malice on the living; therefore if several cases of drowning have occurred in a district, it is supposed that the Water-Demons must be soothed. So a white horse is led to the brink of a link or river (probably he is garlanded with flowers, and is laden with a sack of charms written on yellow paper, which are eagerly bought by the multitude, as amulets for the protection of their homes).

On reaching the river bank the poor white horse is thrown to the ground, and its head is cut off. The blood is collected in an earthenware vessel, and some of it is sprinkled over the paper charms to make them more effective, while the rest is mingled with sand, and placed in a boat, together with the head and legs of the horse. This boat heads a procession of gaily carved and gilded boats, wherein are priests, both Taouist and Buddhist, and villagers armed with matchlocks, which they discharge to terrify the demons, while some one in the foremost boat sprinkles the blood-stained sand on the waters. On reaching the boundary of the district, the horse's head is placed in the earthenware jars and is buried in the bed of the stream.

Thus the Water-Demons are appeased; and as large offerings of pasteboard property are burnt for the use of the neglected dead, and several days and nights are devoted to religious services on their behalf, it is supposed that they likewise ought to be content.

Archdeacon Gray has chanced to be present on the occasions when this remarkable sacrifice has been offered in the immediate neighbourhood of Canton, and describes how on one occasion it formed a feature in an immense funeral service which was held in a great cemetery, where multitudes of friendless poor were buried. Several persons had recently been drowned in the neighbourhood, and it was supposed that the uncared-for dead were in league with the Water-Demons to punish the living for their neglect. So forty thousand persons assembled, and for three days and nights there were religious services on behalf of their spirits. Among the general offerings were upwards of two hundred arm-chairs of bamboo wicker-work which were burnt, with a full complement of life-sized attendants. There were fine dramatic entertainments at the temporary theatre, and brilliant processions of dragon-boats decorated with gorgeous banners of most costly silk.

The decapitation of a white horse was the crowning feature of this Holy Fair, but so ungracious were the Water-Spirits that ere the day was done there was a collision of boats, in which half-a-dozen women were drowned!

Besides these public offerings many persons burn large offerings at their own doors to ensure the spirits giving them full credit for their alms, and so refraining from molesting them. And while all this lamentable waste of substance is going on, the starving beggars find it hard to extract the smallest copper coin wherewith to purchase a handful of rice to appease their hunger—for fear, not charity, is the ruling motive in all this display; and often must these miserable beggars long for the hour of death, which shall raise them to the dignity of becoming objects of dread to the living. Then will they never cry in vain, for superstition has sharp ears, and the slightest unusual sound disturbing the silence of night is interpreted as the call of a hungry spirit—it may be only the rattling of a thin oyster-shell, too loosely set in the window-frame, and shaken by the wind, but it is enough to arouse the sleepers, who go outside the house to burn an offering of paper money. Within the house are placed all manner of charms to prevent the entrance of such unwelcome visitors, and a sword-shaped ornament made of hundreds of copper cash tied

together with red thread is often suspended over the bed, as the surest of all charms for this purpose.

When I speak of all these offerings as "lamentable waste," it is because, although the larger portion are only made of paper, these represent considerable national loss from an industrial point of view, owing to the immense number of men and women who, instead of being employed on work useful to the living, are solely engaged in manufacturing every conceivable paper object which may thus be transmitted to the dead, in the course of these oft-recurring offerings.

Of course this is a subject on which it is extremely difficult to obtain anything like accurate statistics, but enough is known to prove that the sums annually expended throughout the Empire in connection with these offerings to the dead are altogether amazing. In the first place, it is estimated that in every *Hsien* or county, the average annual expenditure, at the three annual feasts on behalf of the destitute dead, is about eighteen thousand dollars. Now the eighteen provinces of the Empire are divided into 1620 *Hsien*. Thus we obtain an annual average of thirty million dollars (£6,000,000) expended on this one branch of the worship.

Secondly, the population of four hundred million persons may be said to represent eighty million families, each of which annually expends on its own ancestors an average of a dollar and a half, making a total of 120,000,000 dollars. (Of course multitudes of the very poor can only give much smaller sums, but the wealthy give immense offerings in this manner in payment to the priests, for oft-repeated Masses for the repose of the dead.)

Further calculations of the sums expended in each province for the propitiation throughout the Empire of the Hsien-deities and the Foo-deities—all on behalf of the dead—run up a grand annual total of a hundred and fifty million dollars, or £32,000,000 English!

It must be allowed that these Offerings of the Dead—this never-ceasing burden of propitiating insatiable spirits—is in truth a heavy item in the annual expenditure of the Celestial Empire.

CHAPTER XVII.

A SINGULAR ENTERTAINMENT.

Sing-Song at the Canton Guild—Afternoon at the play—Summons to dinner in the mandarins' gallery—Selection of the evening play!—Imperial palace—Visit to the gates of hell—Pantomime.

I REALLY am becoming quite a *connaisseur* in temple theatres! They are so unique and so very characteristic, that whenever I find myself near a temple whence unwonted discords proclaim a Sing-Song, I make a point of halting and going in, if only for a few minutes. Some are very shabby, and one glance suffices; but others are really most fascinating, and enable one to form a very good notion of old Court dress and similar details.

To-day we went by special invitation to a most gorgeous entertainment at the Canton Guild, which is to continue for three days at the expense of two wealthy Chinese tea-merchants and the compradors[1] of the city, continuing daily from sunrise till long after midnight, this being one of the special occasions when the prohibition of nocturnal entertainments is rescinded.

As the guests of one of the aforesaid wealthy merchants, Mr Ah Lum met us, and conducted us to an excellent place in the mandarins' gallery, where comfortable chairs are placed in groups round many tiny tables. Though somewhat less striking in point of scenic effect than the Ningpo Guild, this also is an exceedingly handsome building, with fine curved roofs, very rich in detail, supported on pillars, another roof on pillars affording some shelter to the crowd of spectators from the pitiless rain which has poured all the afternoon and most of the evening. In honour of this festive occasion the whole place was decorated with scarlet cloth, and beautiful flowers and shrubs in porcelain vases.

Not wishing to spend a whole day there, we thought it best to go immediately after luncheon, but as soon as we were seated, bowls of excellent birds'-nest soup, with fine macaroni, were brought to us, with the correct chop-sticks, which at the bidding of our host were mercifully exchanged for dumpy little china spoons. Afterwards covered cups of tea were brought in, and whether we drank them or not, relays of hot cups were placed beside us every half hour.

[1] Managers of business-houses.

We came in for the end of some long piece in which the hero was a magician wearing a hideous red mask and a long black beard. He was armed with a magic wand, and long peacocks' feathers drooped from his head-dress. He wore a richly embroidered blue satin robe with white sleeves, and four flags of crimson silk with golden fringe fluttered from his shoulders to represent wings. This ugly monster had carried off a beautiful small-footed woman. Of course we knew that *she* was a man, as no woman ever appears on the Chinese stage, but her acting was so very natural and so essentially feminine that we could scarcely realise this fact, which was often impressed upon us. How the effect of the small feet was produced, was the most puzzling thing of all; but the lady tottered about in the most natural style, carefully displaying the little deformed "golden lily feet," and bestowing upon us most bewitching glances from behind her fan, as if craving our sympathy, while pouring forth her tale of sorrow in a shrill high treble—a most singular falsetto, which all these masculine actresses seem able to assume. The father of this beautiful lady and another man each aspired to being made Emperor. The other man showed his ambition by painting his face of a glossy brown like a mask. All the Court dresses were splendid, and the solemnities were relieved by the buffooneries of a very funny Court fool, who wore a queer sort of straw bonnet!

The magician argued and scolded in a more manly sing-sing, quite as wearisome to the ear, and gesticulated and whirled himself wildly about, while the dreadful orchestra banged vigorously on gongs and kettle-drums, beat wooden clappers, clanged cymbals, and produced dismal wails from various stringed instruments, the whole resulting in a never-ceasing series of most excruciating discords. Then another couple appeared upon the scene, but evidently their wooing was not sanctioned by the gods, for suddenly, amid flashing flames, a magnificent joss, clothed in black satin embroidered with golden dragons, appeared on a high pedestal. The culprits fell at his feet as if dead. Rising and trembling, the man, after a long struggle, obeyed the command of the god, and cut off the woman's head. Her blood spurted all over him—a horrible sight; but, to prevent its being too realistic, the corpse quickly rose and tottered out, while the hero caught up a sham head which had been rolled to his feet!

Then the scene changed. The Empress of China (also a man!) appeared in most gorgeous apparel. She was a really pretty woman, with clear pale complexion and aquiline nose. By means

of careful painting, the eyes attain to something of the oblique angle which is considered so very high-class, but which really is not very common.

We now had to return home to receive another mandarin, who was bringing his wife to tea with us, but our friend kindly insisted on our returning to dine with him at the Canton Guild at 6 P.M., which we accordingly did, being summoned in due form by a servant bringing us his master's enormous red visiting-card, which signified "Come, for all things are now ready." It appears that the sending of this intimation is *de rigueur*. The omission would imply that the original invitation had been a mere formality, not meant to be accepted, so the unceremonious guest who should present himself ere receiving this final summons, might possibly find that no feast had been prepared!

We found all the little tables in the mandarins' gallery spread for a Chinese feast, with all manner of odd and end dishes to be nibbled and tasted in the intervals of the real courses, which were brought in, one bowl at a time, whence our host and his friend helped us all with their own chop-sticks. The cooking was first-class, and we thought many of the dishes excellent, such as sharks'-fin soup, pigeons'-egg soup, ducks' tongues, samlin fish, bamboo shoots, fishes' brains, stewed ducks' feet, sinews of whale, stewed pigeon and mushrooms, roast sucking-pig and fungus, water-chest-nuts, *bêche-de-mer*, little balls of meat in dough, and a multitude of other good things. It was a very prolonged feast, and all the time the play was going on for our entertainment.

Our host being one of the principal persons present, several of the boy actresses waited on us, and kept our tiny wine-cups constantly filled with hot samshu, or suee-chow, a weak rice wine, feeble cider, perry, or other decoctions of fruit, plum wine, rich and rare, or ethereal draughts of rose-water, evidently deeming it the height of hospitality to hold the said wee cups to the lips of our English gentlemen, compelling them to drain the cup each time, which, considering that they only hold a thimbleful of the feeblest wine, very like the cowslip-wine of our childhood, was not a serious trial of their drinking capacities! But the pretty ladies kept up their feminine character quite gracefully, and allowed us a close inspection of their tiny feet, which left us more puzzled than ever as to how they *could* walk, and what they could have done with their own large feet!

Presently, at the bidding of Mr Ah Lum, the *prima donna* brought me two long tablets of polished ivory, on which were

inscribed in Chinese characters the names of about twenty plays, and I was asked to select whichever I pleased. This I might really have done (with the assistance of my more learned companions), as the company were prepared to act any one of them with equal readiness, their memory and powers of endurance being alike marvellous.

Of course none of us were so rash as to comply, so I handed the tablets to our host, who selected a play which he thought would interest us, and certainly nothing more extraordinary could be conceived! There was a Chinese Emperor with a long white beard, and a pretty Empress with delicate features and aquiline nose. Both wore wonderfully jewelled head-dresses, and rich robes embroidered with dragons. They sat together beneath a huge State umbrella. Around them stood nobles in gorgeous apparel, and a gigantic magician with beard reaching to his knees. One hand played with his beard, the other waved a fan, on his head was a jewelled helmet. He was attended by a dwarf, old and bearded. He, too, was gorgeously arrayed, and he bore a sword and a standard, which last was simply a dragon impaled on a spear. In the background were more magicians, soldiers, and musicians, each fearful and wonderful to behold and to hear!

Then there was a boat scene, and a free fight on board, which was a wonderful display of agile fencing, and leaping, and tumbling, and all manner of acrobatic feats.

Presently the magician carried off the lover of a beautiful lady —a great mandarin—and consigned him to the care of a company of Buddhist priests, in the richest of vestments. These persuaded him to join their order, and to say the mystic words O-mi-to-fu, so when next he met his lady-love he was vowed to celibacy.

Then the Emperor, much impressed with the power of the magician, prayed to be allowed a glimpse of life within the gates of hell. Thither accordingly he and his counsellor were transported, and they (and we) looked in, and beheld all the tortures which in the Canton and other temples are so vividly exemplified of images, being realistically acted! Wretched men with iron chains round their necks, and struggling horribly, were dragged in by hideous devils, with fire flashing around them. One was sawn in two across the chest; another across the skull, the ends of the saw moving on each side, and the blood streaming—a most sickening sight!

Then a small-footed woman was dragged in and turned head downwards into a mill, into which the small feet were slowly dragged. A man was thrown into a rice-pounding machine. A

woman (in effigy) was carried in, and flaming devils tore her limb from limb. We were told afterwards that we might consider ourselves fortunate in not having been compelled to witness a crucifixion, which is so common a punishment in China!

Some of the punishments awarded strike straight home to the crimes committed. The man who had stolen a mule was represented as having been swallowed by a gigantic fiery horse, and the head of the culprit protruded from a hole in its chest! Priests who had received money for Masses which they neglected to say were condemned to read aloud for ever from very small print by the light of a very dim lamp. Thieves had their fingers cruelly crushed; murderers were devoured by a burning thirst, and though surrounded by water cannot obtain a draught. Mandarins who have proved tyrants are imprisoned in cages, wherein they cannot stand upright. Bad nuns are made to ascend a high tower whence they may look back to the scenes of innocent childhood, and forward to a menagerie of loathsome reptiles whose forms they are condemned successively to wear.

Fraudulent trustees are suffocated in dark sand-clouds; and, as I have already had occasion to observe,[1] physicians who have collected bones from old graves to make medicine[2] are boiled in oil; sacrilegious robbers who have scraped the gilding off idols or shrines are hung up and disembowelled; backbiters and slanderers are transformed into reptiles; men who have destroyed good books are hung up by the feet and flayed alive. Those who have been cruel to their parents are trampled on by wild horses, and so on *ad infinitum*.

The executioners of these luckless victims wore hideous masks and eccentric raiment, and were attended by troops of satanic imps.

The scene changed and showed a bridge, over which the good walked safely, but the wicked fell into the river, to be devoured by hideous and repulsive reptiles. Then we were shown a great stone gateway with only a circular opening, through which multitudes of people passed to symbolise a new birth, while devils lay in wait outside seeking to capture those who had been wicked when on earth.

[1] Pages 122 and 214.

[2] This is not the only illegal use to which the bones of the dead are applied. Amongst many other forms of witchcraft practised by Chinese dabblers in the black art, it seems that one class of witches are the special avengers of ill-treated wives, at whose request they collect the bones of infants, and (while invoking the aid of the evil genii of these little ones) they reduce the bones to fine powder, which the vengeful wife is instructed day by day to administer to her husband in divers drinks, hoping thereby to effect his death.

After this we had some delightfully grotesque scenes. The stage was covered with all manner of zoological specimens—frogs, lizards, turtles, pigs, crawling reptiles, and a very tall ostrich. Then fairies appeared, and a fairy in a huge shell snapped up a turtle, and otherwise molested the animals, but they in their turn were harried by a huge bird. A troop of monkeys next appeared, and were attacked by men, who got the worst of the fight; but a multitude of insects came to their rescue—beetles, grasshoppers, and butterflies,—these fought with the great big monkeys and overcame them. These actors were tiny Chinese children, adorned with wings.

It was exceedingly amusing to see the matter-of-fact way in which the various actors calmly slipped off their animal or insect skins and masks, and revealed themselves in their ordinary working clothes while still in full view of the audience! After awhile a gigantic red cock stalked in, in a feather coat, strutting and crowing, and pretending to eat the insects, who crawled beneath him and disappeared!

Again the scene changed to the Imperial Palace at Peking. I do not mean to imply that there was any scenery, for there is never anything of the sort, the Imperial throne and its surroundings being very simply suggested; but the magnificent five-clawed dragons, embroidered in gold on raiment and on banners, tell their tale unmistakably, inasmuch as terrible penalties attend the use by any subject of this Imperial symbol.

The present scene showed the Emperor in great bodily suffering, and his son praying for his recovery. Crowds of anxious courtiers grouped around. Another son had been falsely accused of some crime; but a stately old mandarin pleaded for his life with impassioned fervour—really a fine piece of acting. Then the finding of the son's girdle enabled him to prove an *alibi*, and all ended happily.

It was now 10.30, and we thought we had seen enough, so we took leave of the hospitable host who had provided for us so unique an accompaniment to a feast!

CHAPTER XVIII.

FENG-SHUI.

An anti-fire charm—The rain dragon—Taken for a convict!—The dragon stone—A Taouist temple—Goddess of sight—Modes of divination—Sceptical proclamations—Of divers superstitions—*Feng-shui*—Excuse for burning the C.M.S. college—The riot—Question of compensation—English and American treaty rights—Incongruous claims.

U.S. Consulate, Nantai.

My first pleasant day with Mrs Baldwin in the heart of the city only made me eager to see more under the same kind auspices; accordingly good human ponies shouldered me and the wicker chair once more, and trotted off hither. Passing the Ningpo Guild, where the throng of blue-clad Chinamen, and the unmistakable sounds of a theatrical orchestra, announced that a Sing-Song was going on at the temple theatre, I went in for a few minutes, and saw some really pretty acting by a first-rate troupe of gorgeously-apparelled actors. The officials offered me a good seat, but being already rather behind time, and having about three miles to go across the busy city, I had to hurry on.

Halting at the American Mission only long enough for an ever-welcome cup of Europeanised tea, we straightway started through slummy streets to the venerable walls of the city, along whose ramparts we travelled till we reached the Great North Gate, a ponderous two-storeyed building, commanding a splendid, wide-spread view of the city, the plain, the windings of the river, and the great range of encircling mountains.

Close by the gate stand seven water-jars of stone, each enclosed by a stone railing. It is believed that so long as there is water in these jars there will be no fires in the city of Foo-Chow, therefore it is the duty of a special official to see that in the driest summer the water is never allowed to dry up.

Certainly the Great Dragon, who regulates all matters relating to fire and water, is very strangely influenced. In Canton, some years ago, there was a terrible drought which defied all efforts of priests and soothsayers. Prayers and fasting, public humiliation and prolonged religious services were all in vain, till at length a magician revealed to the officials that the one action which would ensure the favour of the Dragon-King, was that the Great South

Gate of the city should be closed, and that water-tubs filled to the brim should be placed in the gateway. In these tubs frogs were to be placed, and the geomancer promised that rain should be granted in answer to their croaking. The said croaking was considerably intensified by the amount of annoyance to which the luckless frogs were subjected by the small boys of the city, and by a singular coincidence the much-desired rain soon followed!

During our excursion this morning I had an amusing illustration of how different may be the effect of any given subject on different minds. I had already discovered that my favourite large black fan, which in England was the height of fashion, was quite incorrect here,—that only a coolie would carry a black fan, and that its broad folds were essentially masculine—at least twice the correct width for a lady's use! This morning the rock of offence was my india-rubber chain, which I flattered myself could not be distinguished from jet, and which has the merit of being certainly less brittle! Well, when we were being carried in our chairs on the city walls, this caught the eye of a party of Tartar soldiers, one of whom explained the situation to his comrades. "Look at that woman's iron chain," he said. "Undoubtedly she is a convict who has been banished for some offence, and now they are carrying her away." ("They," meaning Mrs Baldwin and the chair-coolies!)

Profiting by the hint, I hid the obnoxious chain, and we descended into the Tartar city, where we saw a wedding-party, and noted that the women wore three rings in each ear, and that their hair was strangely dressed and covered with jewellery, consisting chiefly of flowers made of small pearls and bright kingfishers' feathers. We saw the roofs of the Great Hall where candidates for literary honours undergo the terribly exhausting examinations which cost so many lives. It seemed to be the counterpart of that which we had already seen at Canton.[1]

Then we visited sundry temples where priests of divers creeds all received us courteously, and did the honours of their very curious, but by no means cleanly, shrines. In one, on the same hill as the American Mission, a civil young priest took us into an inner shrine to see a great block of polished black limestone, twelve feet in height by five in width, and one and a half in thickness, which is covered all over with beautifully carved dragons. It is raised on a great pedestal.

Another point of interest was a fine Taouist temple, the roof of which is supported by about thirty huge monolithic pillars of

[1] And of another which I subsequently visited at Peking.

granite, where (in singular contrast to the calm smooth-faced shaven gilt images in Buddha's temples, or to his own, with the invariable curiously curly hair) there are huge images with straight hair and very long black moustaches; and in the side-court, a series of gilt images like Tartar mandarins mounted on gilt horses, and escorted by gilt servants. This is one of the great military temples for the Tartar soldiery; its chief priests were arrayed in robes of green satin, and their long hair was plaited and rolled up, and surmounted by a small peculiarly shaped comb of yellow tortoise-shell. The Buddhist priests are, of course, well shaven, and their yellow robes are sometimes enlivened by a rose-coloured stole, while the inferior orders appear robed in grey.

We are becoming quite *connaisseurs* in vestments and images!

In one of the side chapels of the great Taouist temple, we noticed a goddess who apparently is the guardian of sight; and a very careless one she must be, judging from the amount of blindness we see, due to neglected ophthalmia. But none the less do her votaries bring to her shrine votive offerings of spectacles—small paper spectacles from the very poor, and enormous ones of calico from richer sufferers, Chinese spectacles being at all times large and cumbersome objects. Another of these side chapels is occupied by the Goddess Kum-Fa, the patroness of mothers, devoutly worshipped by all women and girls. She is surrounded by a great array of Celestial nurses, each tending a young baby, and to each is assigned some special function in the care of every infant, either before or after its birth. All these must be propitiated by women who hope to become mothers, while those whose little ones are sick may buy packets of tea in the temple, and offer them to the goddess, who graciously permits the mother to take back the said tea, mingling it with ashes from the sacred incense, and thence preparing a consecrated and healing drink to be given to the sick child.

There is a very favourite method of ascertaining the will of the gods, which I constantly see practised in the temples. It is called divination by the Ka-pue, which is a wooden object the size of your two hands, shaped like an acorn, but made in two halves—one convex, the other flat. The person who wishes to consult the oracle kneels reverently before the image of the god or goddess whose counsel he craves, and having explained the subject on which he wants advice, he takes the Ka-pue from off the altar, passes it through the smoke of the incense, and then throws it upward before the idol. According to the manner in which the two halves fall, so he reads his answer. If both fall on the flat side,

he knows that his prayer is refused, or that he had better give up his project. If both fall on the rounded side, it would appear that the god really has no opinion to offer; but when one falls flat, and the other falls round, the omen is excellent.

Another very common mode of inquiring into the future is by means of a number of strips of split bamboo, each numbered. These are placed upright in a bamboo stand, which the inquirer takes from off the altar, and gently shakes till one falls out; this he hands to the priest, who compares its number with a corresponding number in a book, from which he reads an oracular reply. An amiable priest at Canton was good enough thus to favour me with some details of futurity, but I cannot say the information vouchsafed was very remarkable.

A curious glimpse into one class of superstition was recently afforded by a proclamation issued by the governor-general of this province, whereby incantations to bring about the death of others are declared to be illegal and hateful offences. The subject is chiefly interesting from its close affinity to a form of witchcraft which is still occasionally practised in Britain.[1] "You are forbidden," says Governor Wang, "if you have a grudge against any one, to practise the magic called 'Striking the Bull's Head'—that is to say, writing a man's name and age on a scrap of paper, and laying it before the bull-headed idol, and then buying an iron stamp, and piercing small holes in this paper, and finally throwing it at the man on the sly with the intention of compassing his death."

Where such superstitious practices as these are common, we need not wonder at the facility with which the learned gentry contrive to rouse the fanaticism of the people to a very dangerous pitch, by circulating the most puerile rumours, which are generally directed against the Christians. Such was the widespread rumour that those initiated into Christian mysteries were required to swallow a medicine composed of the eyes of corpses, and to destroy their ancestral tablets!

One of the most serious of these scares was the Shan-sin-fan or "genii powder-plot," when emissaries were employed throughout all the Southern Provinces to distribute small powders, which they

[1] So recently as December 1883 a case was tried at the Inverness Police Court, in which the cause of offence was the discovery of a clay image with pins stuck through it, in order to compass the death of a neighbour, a discovery which resulted in an assault. Many similar cases have been discovered both in England and Scotland. See 'In the Hebrides,' pp. 263-265. By C. F. Gordon Cumming. Chatto & Windus.

assured the people would prevent calamity and disease. Of course these were eagerly sought after, when suddenly, as if by magic, placards appeared in every direction, warning the people that the powder was "a subtle poison issued with sly venom by the foreign devils," with the intent that within twenty days the victims should be attacked by a terrible disease which none save the foreign missionaries could cure, and that they would only do so on condition of the sufferers becoming Christians, and practising all manner of vile crimes.

So intense was the excitement thus aroused, that a general persecution ensued—the native Christians were beaten and half-killed, their houses and chapels destroyed, and for some time a foreigner hardly dared to set foot in the city of Foo-Chow, far less in the villages.

Of course, before very long, the people realised that they had been befooled, and had attacked their peaceful neighbours without cause; so then, of course, they were rather ashamed, and more inclined to think well of the faith to which these had proved so steadfast, and which had taught them to be so strangely forgiving.

Nevertheless there are still two superstitions so deeply rooted in the national mind that an allusion to these is at any time sufficient to arouse the mob.[1] These two ruling forces are FEAR AND REVERENCE FOR THE DEAD, and the mysterious, undefinable FENG-SHUI; and truly it seems impossible for any one who has not had long experience of this extraordinary and incomprehensible race to realise the extent to which all social and domestic life is influenced by these twin forces, which are so inextricably blended and seem to permeate all things—even such as at first sight would seem to have no sort of connection with either.

The literal interpretation of *feng-shui* is Wind and Water, but what idea the term conveys to a Chinaman's mind no one seems able to define, beyond that it has to do with the good and genial influences which are ever moving gently from the south, and also with the baneful influences which come from the north, and which may possibly be disturbed by any alteration of existing

[1] Again I must say, Europe need not scoff at Chinese superstition. While the cholera was raging at Naples in September 1884, it was currently believed by the peasants that they were being poisoned with "cholera powder" scattered by the doctors and police, by order of Government! An English physician, who was collecting geological specimens on the volcanic isle of Ponza, was compelled to leave the island because the inhabitants could not be convinced that he was not manufacturing this dreaded cholera powder!

physical surroundings. It seems almost impossible for a foreigner to arrive at any exact understanding of this great overruling belief of the millions of Chinamen, yet no one can be many hours in China ere the term becomes so familiar as to make its solution a matter much desired. Apparently it has especial reference to the repose of the dead, and the influence of the mighty host of disembodied spirits upon the welfare or adversity of their living human successors on this earth.

It is something intangible and indescribable, yet omnipotent—a vague, shadowy spirit of evil, which stands in the way, and effectually bars every effort in favour of progress and civilisation.

It is the mainspring of that ultra-conservatism which, like a mightily resistant breakwater, so stoutly wards off the inflowing tide of all modern inventions, practically declaring the only safe condition of existence to be one of utter inertia, in which nothing old shall be disturbed, and nothing new attempted.

In short, a whisper of *feng-shui* raised by the *literati*, and passed on to the populace, suffices at any moment to inflame their deadliest superstitions and incite them to all manner of mischief. Each man takes it personally, and as a warning cry that something is being done which may annoy his dead ancestors, in which case they will inevitably begin by taking vengeance on him.

Why does a Chinaman object to his neighbour building a top storey to his house? Because his doing so may disturb the *feng-shui*—those gracious influences which now come straight over the city to the hall of his ancestral tablets, or to the graves where his dead are laid.

Why does he object to the making of a railway? Because the whole country is dotted with ancestral graves, each of which has been dug on a site selected after long consideration, and repeated payments to a soothsayer deeply versed in the mysteries of *feng-shui*—a spot selected as that of all others most certain to attract those gentle southern influences, and well shielded from all baneful blasts from the chill north. So to make a railway would stir up the spirits of countless past generations, and let loose on the country a whole army of unquiet and malevolent ghosts.[1]

[1] As standing examples of the reality of this opponent to material progress we have the history of the railway from Woo-Shing to Shanghai, which, after it was in full working order, was bought up by the Chinese Government at a great cost, only to be torn up on this account, and all its plant safely deported to Formosa, where it was deposited, and left to rust upon the beach.

Then, too (when Li Hung Chang, the great advocate of progress, had succeeded in forming the Kai-ping Coal Mining Company with a view to developing the vast mineral resources of his country), after four years had been spent in boring and

Is it desirable to sink a mine, or to erect a windmill or a water-mill? Great consultation is requisite before perpetrating a deed which may so greatly disturb the influences of air and water.

Do I wish to build a high wall on my own honestly purchased land? My neighbour may object that, by so doing, I turn aside the course of the spirits, who always come from that particular quarter to do him good. So if I persist in building my wall, the chances are that he will raise a mob and come to pull it down, and neither the Chinese nor the British authorities will move a finger to obtain redress for me. If, on the other hand, I venture to pull down an old wall on my own land, my neighbour may be equally annoyed, as I thereby open a straight course by which malevolent spirits may reach him from an unlucky quarter.

As good a definition of the undefinable as can well be obtained was given to me by Monsignor Gentili, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Ningpo, who described the *feng-shui* as being the path of the Great Dragon, who rushes through the air just above the houses, spouting blessings in showers from his nostrils. He flies straight forward, unless by evil chance he should strike against some high building, in which case he turns aside at an angle, and so the houses beyond lose their share of his blessing. Hence the jealous care of Chinese house-builders lest any one should build a house higher than his neighbour, and the singular uniformity of domestic architecture as seen from any high ground in the cities.

Hence, too, the mystic adoration of the shadowy, indefinite Dragon which figures so largely in all Chinese art, literature, and religion, recurring in a thousand forms. His image, carved and gilt, is twisted round the ridge-pole of the temple, and peeps from beneath the eaves. On the Imperial banner he reigns supreme, distinguished by an extra claw; and even in domestic art he is represented in gorgeous embroideries of silk and gold, and sometimes is dimly revealed on the silken hangings on the wall—most masterly paintings in Indian ink, but so shadowy that not till we have gazed for a while do we clearly discern the dimly delineated

shaft-sinking, the reactionary party raised the *feng-shui* spectre, asserting that the sickness prevailing in the Imperial Palace at Peking was due to the disturbance caused to the spirit of the Empress Dowager by all this tunnelling within sixty miles of her tomb! So by Imperial edict the work so displeasing to the dead was arrested.

Happily, however, after a while wiser counsels prevailed, and the north ports and steamers are now supplied with cheap and excellent coal, brought from the mines by the Kai-ping railway, which has now been working for four years so successfully as to overcome all spiritual scruples, resulting in an Imperial edict for its extension.

monster, half veiled by misty clouds, flames, or waves, all of which indicate those natural forces which he controls.

The same law which compels the Dragon to move in straight lines regulates the movements of all spirits, to whom anything of the nature of a zigzag is peculiarly puzzling. For this reason those who have assisted in the murder of a female baby are very particular to carry it to the grave by a path of this description, so that the baby spirit may fail in its endeavours to return, should it seek to avenge itself on its unnatural parents.

This, too, is the reason why in Chinese houses the doors and windows are all placed irregularly, never facing one another, and especially why we often see a meaningless-looking bit of wall placed just outside the outer gate, and a little larger than the entrance. It serves the same purpose as the screen which is placed between the door and the coffin in the house of the dead. The spirits in their flight will strike this wall, and instead of rushing into the house by the open doorway will be turned aside. It never occurs to them to double round the wall, and so find their way in!

Thus do fear and reverence for the dead combine with the mysterious *feng-shui* to form the ruling principle of all existence in China. They are the twin giants whose power all acknowledge, and against whom all resistance seems useless.

This may appear rather a tedious digression on a very nonsensical subject, but unfortunately it is one which throughout this empire is a living reality, and one which is not only a bar to all scientific and material progress, but also often involves real danger and persecution to the promoters of Christian work—as we most fully realised this morning when looking upon the blackened ruins of the Theological College of the Church Missionary Society, which was burnt last August by a mob stirred up by the *literati* on this very ground. The Mission had for twenty-eight years remained in fairly peaceful possession of this site, which very soon after their arrival in 1849 was offered to them by these very *literati* in exchange for that which had previously been assigned to them at the foot of the hill.

The inmates of the Mission were on the best of terms with the townspeople around them, and with the priests of the temples on the said hill. But as the number of converts increased, so did that of men desiring special training to fit them for the work of catechists.

In 1877 there were forty-five resident students, and it became positively necessary to provide quarters for them in a proper college.

Negotiations were accordingly commenced for the purchase of a piece of land close by the Mission premises. Here a single-storeyed house could have been advantageously erected, and the owners of the land were most willing to sell it. But the mandarins (jealous of the increasing influence of the Mission, and greatly encouraged in their hostility by the fact that various outrages against Christians in different parts of this province had been allowed to pass over unpunished and unredressed) positively forbade the sale.

The members of the Mission were therefore compelled to make the most of their own resources, and on re-examining their own ground, they found that by much ingenuity they could contrive to erect a very good building on a small foundation within their own enclosure, which hitherto had been used as a rubbish-heap. By planning a second storey, larger than the base, and a third, which should overlap both, the whole being built up against the hillside, a house was designed which should supply forty-eight tiny rooms for students, a large dining-room and lecture-room, and a study and lecture-room for the European in charge.

In China it is necessary to act warily in all things, and to make sure of official sanction in all details, so these plans were submitted to the British Consul, who personally inspected the site, and gave his written consent to the erection of the college. Builders were engaged, and soon the work was in full progress, without any objection being made from any quarter.

In the course of the summer it was completed, and the students had just got comfortably settled, when Lin-Ying-Lin, a notorious leader of the anti-foreign party, who had been absent at Canton, returned to Foo-Chow, and immediately afterwards several friendly heathen came and warned the missionaries that this man was stirring up mischief, and that unless he were apprehended there would be a riot. They added that the Viceroy had sanctioned the destruction of the college. This was duly reported to the British Consul, to whom also the Chinese authorities now presented a formal complaint that the Mission had encroached upon land not belonging to it. This was positively untrue (as was easily proven, an old photograph coming in very useful as a witness which could not lie), but it furnished the desired excuse.

It was then agreed that the official mandarins should meet the clergy on the Mission ground to examine the boundaries amicably, and see whether, as was averred, the boundary wall had been moved. Meanwhile, however, the *literati* had raised the cry of

"FENG-SHUI!" to rouse the ignorant people. They now declared that the building of foreign houses on the hill would destroy the *feng-shui* of the city; that to this cause were due various fires in the city, the death of several distinguished men in distant parts of the country, and sundry other disasters.

So on the day of the official visit of the four mandarins, they were escorted not only by their own fifty followers, but by at least as many more unruly men not belonging to the town, but hired from native villages, and wild with excitement, having been freely supplied with wine at the neighbouring temple (to which the wine had been brought for this purpose on the previous day).

After some delay the English Consul arrived, followed soon after by ten mandarins with a party of *unarmed* soldiers. The mob began throwing stones at the college, and the Consul asked the mandarins to interfere. They refused, saying "it was only boys' play!" and, moreover, in a very uncourteous manner bade him "hold his peace." So he actually was obliged to stand by, while the mandarins sat calmly down in their sedan-chairs literally superintending the destruction that ensued.

The mob having broken into the college, amused themselves by dragging out the furniture, and all the students' clothes and books, of which they made a bonfire. Then the new college was set on fire, and finally the other school was torn down. All night the mob stayed about the Mission premises, tearing up the garden, and yelling out fearful insults to the inmates—a terrible night indeed for these English clergymen, with their wives, and the English ladies in charge of the Chinese Girls' Boarding-school.

On the following morning the hired mob returned, and tried to break into the Mission-house and the school, but happily the ladies, with all their fine family of Chinese girls, were able to escape by a back door, whence they made their way down the rock into the street, where the real inhabitants of the city, who are most friendly to both the English and American Missions, crowded round them, expressing their shame and grief at the outrage, saying they would gladly have come to the rescue had they dared, but that they knew that interference would only result in the destruction of their own houses. They at once gave the names of the few gentry who had instigated the whole riot—a handful of petty landowners—the big gentry having kept quite aloof in all this matter.

This four-mile flight across the city, through densely crowded streets, was no easy task for such a company, including small-footed girls, to whom walking is a terrible difficulty; but they

received no annoyance whatever from the people, and at last reached the foreign settlement in safety.

After the ladies had escaped, the clergy who stayed to defend the Mission-house were hotly besieged. That siege furnished one characteristic incident which is pleasant to record. All doors and windows had been barricaded, save one, which could not be fastened in any way. When the besieged heard the rioters assemble at this point, they gave up all for lost. To their amazement, however, they saw the handle being turned backwards and forwards without any result, and once or twice it opened a little bit, but instantly closed again, and at last they discovered the secret, which was, that two strong men, who were kindly disposed to the missionaries, had mingled in the crowd on purpose to protect them, and from morning till night they held possession of this door, pretending to be using their utmost strength to open it, but in reality preventing any one from approaching!

This being a case of aggression too serious to be slurred over, the Consul made a formal complaint, requiring the Chinese officials to make restitution, agreeably to certain clauses in the treaty of Tien-tsin. Accordingly, in due course of time, orders came from Peking to the Viceroy here, desiring that the college should be rebuilt, compensation made, the *literati* warned, and rioters punished. This satisfactory edict was duly proclaimed, but there apparently the matter rested for about four months, when the Viceroy sent Laboo, the naval commander, to submit to the members of the Mission—the Rev. J. R. Wolfe, the Rev. L. Lloyd, and the Rev. R. W. Stewart, three clergymen of the Church of England — the written draft of a most equitable offer of compensation, including the granting of a new lease of the same ground, the rebuilding of the college on the adjoining site, and various other items.

This was the Viceroy's own proposition, and it was submitted on two separate occasions to the members of the Mission, who were perfectly satisfied; but notwithstanding all their entreaties and expostulations, the British Consul positively refused to accept the terms, affirming his resolution to have a much larger indemnity for the outrage. Unfortunately the claims which he made (and which have been detailed by the Chinese to several foreigners) were of such a nature that the Viceroy could not entertain them, so the good opportunity was lost, and at the end of January the tide turned again, a new official, the great Ting (formerly Governor of this province), having appeared on the scene to investigate

matters as Imperial Commissioner. So now nothing more is heard of the Viceroy's offer; which, indeed, he now denies having ever made—for in this country men swear backwards or forwards, in any way which suits the powers that be!

This new man has turned the whole question against the Mission, on the ground of their encroaching (though that has been entirely disproved), and for the last three months nothing has been done openly, though there can be no doubt that the time has allowed for ample coaching of native witnesses.

After Sir Thomas Wade[1] arrived here, about three weeks ago, the authorities pretended that in accordance with the treaty they had brought the ringleaders to justice, and they published a list of the principal culprits and their sentences. It is well known that, with the exception of Lin-Ying-Lin, whose licence to teach was nominally suspended for a short time, not one of these men was in any way concerned with the riot! They are known to be simply a set of wretched jail-birds, taken from prison, and promised exemption from worse penalties if they would confess to having led the Wu-Shih-Shan riot, which, of course, they are thankful to do. The only item suggested as compensation for the Mission is a ridiculously small sum, simply nominal, to cover the whole loss of college, school, &c., and a small sum to the students to replace their burnt clothes.[2]

So now the great Wu-Shih-Shan case has reached a most extraordinary stage altogether unprecedented in history. The Chinese have placed their case in the hands of a clever English lawyer—a Q.C., under whose auspices these incendiaries, with hands uncleansed from the guilt of arson, are to be allowed to appear as plaintiffs against the missionaries in an English court of

[1] H.B.M. Minister for China.

[2] That such things *are* done in China is well authenticated. After the Tien-tsin massacre, it was stated that of the sixteen men supposed to have been the true murderers, only six were executed; the other ten were allowed to escape, and ten persons were substituted, who were known on all hands to be innocent. So far from being abhorred as murderers, they were looked upon as martyrs to a holy cause. Five hundred taels were paid for each victim to his surviving relatives, one hundred taels being paid in advance for the purchase of handsome coffins and silk grave-clothes. The balance was paid with much ceremony after the execution.

The heads of the victims, instead of being exposed in a wooden cage on the city walls in the usual manner, were sewed on again, to secure for the dead an honourable entry into the world of spirits, and the bodies were then restored to their friends to be laid out in state, preparatory to a public funeral.

So perfectly was this substitution of victims understood, that the Russian Consul-General entered his protest against this second Tien-tsin massacre, but the representatives of the other foreign Powers deemed it expedient to let it pass unquestioned.

law, these being thus dragged into law expenses as defendants! The anti-foreign party are now exultant, and openly express their hopes that their new leader will succeed in dislodging the Mission from the city.

On the other hand, all the native Christians in town and country are in despair. Every day deputations arrive at the Mission from all parts of the country, praying that no concessions may be made, as any such would endanger all their lives. As it is, their position is at best a most unenviable one, owing to the well-founded conviction of their own officials, that they need not hope for protection from the British authorities, notwithstanding the clause in Lord Elgin's treaty of Tien-tsin, which stipulates that "all persons teaching or professing the Christian Faith, whether Protestant or Roman Catholic, shall alike be entitled to the protection of the Chinese authorities—nor shall any such, peaceably pursuing their calling, and not offending against the laws, be persecuted or interfered with."

The same treaty entitles British subjects to hold land in the interior of the country in their own names—a concession which is likewise granted to Russian, French, German, and American subjects, whose right to do so is not only freely acknowledged, but whenever, in any riot, their property is injured, or chapels destroyed, reparation is made without delay or hesitation. As regards British subjects, however, their rights under this clause are so wholly ignored that the Church of England Mission is compelled to hold all its out-stations in the name of Chinese converts!

The very practical result is, that although the Church of England has upwards of one hundred out-stations[1] in this province, each under the care of a native catechist, the land is in every case held in the name of native Christians, and so when English mission property is destroyed by rioters, the real owners are simply told that they have no business to be there! And as to the protection secured for native Christians, it is a dead letter, so long as they are connected with the English Church. One outrage after another passes unnoticed.

For instance, about three years ago, in the city of Kieng-Ming-Foo, a paid gang of ruffians seized both teachers and students, stripped them and hung them up naked on trees, heaping every conceivable insult upon them—forcing such filth into their mouths that some of them fainted. Finally, they were marched naked

[1] These have now been increased to 130.

through the streets, and subjected to such indignities that the teacher, the Rev. Mr Ling, a good and faithful native clergyman, died from the effects of their maltreatment. But the outrage was allowed to pass unpunished.

Again, only two months before I came here, a riot was stirred up at Tik-kau in the same district, when the *literati* issued proclamations demanding the expulsion of all Christians from the district; considerable damage was done to mission property, and the converts were grossly insulted. The Mission here was much censured for reporting so trivial a matter at the British Consulate, and the matter was ignored. Consequently last week we had a postscript from the same district, the four native teachers having been carried in here all but dead. Two are dying; indeed, the mob left them for dead on the street, after kicking and battering them all over, and finally set fire to their clothes. The other two escaped, thanks to their having been thrown into the river under the impression that they were already dead, but though bruised and maimed they survive.

These men had assembled from their several villages at the bidding of the mandarins, on the pretext of a judicial examination into the previous riot, but it was the beating of the official gong at night that summoned the mob which dragged them from their beds and beat them till they were left for dead! Then the mandarins appeared on the scene in the guise of sympathetic protectors, and sent them down here.

But for these and numerous other aggressions, there appears no prospect whatever of redress—on the contrary, men of unassailable character have been thrown into loathsome Chinese prisons, and there left to languish for months, on no other ground than their friendliness to the Christians.

On the other hand, if anything of the sort occurs to the American Mission stations, the U.S. Consul insists on the Chinese at once rebuilding the churches and paying compensation for damage done; and so well do the mandarins know this, that they frequently volunteer repairs and compensation without even waiting to be asked. For instance, within the last few days news has come of a serious attack by an armed mob on an American chapel. In *this* case, the Chinese magistrates immediately interfered, compelled the rioters to pay all the expenses of rebuilding the church, medical attendance for the wounded, to find six months' security for the safety of the persons who had been assaulted, and, moreover, to pay a fine as compensation to the sufferers—*which, how-*

ever, these (albeit Chinamen, and very poor men) declined to receive, lest the purity of their motives should be suspected!

One singular feature in the present difficulty is the very arbitrary distinction which is drawn by the British authorities between the protection due to Mission and mercantile property—as if, as some one once remarked, the British subject who sells Bibles is not entitled to exactly the same protection under treaty rights as the man who sells opium or any other foreign merchandise! The fact that the one hopes to benefit the Chinese, and the other seeks only his own profit, of course does not weigh in this balance—all that is asked is fair-play. Certainly, as regards the concession to Chinese prejudice, which is deemed so essential in the present instance, it must be admitted that all the opposition which has ever been stirred up against Missions and Bible-sellers is as nothing compared with the vigorous and prolonged efforts which were made by the Chinese for the exclusion of opium, but in that matter their most just remonstrances were silenced by the roar of artillery!

But there is no gainsaying the fact, that many persons look upon missionaries and their work as altogether a mistake—an annoying effort to bring about undesirable and unprofitable changes. What a pity it must seem to such thinkers that St Columba or St Patrick ever took the trouble to come to Britain, or indeed that a handful of low-born Jews should have presumed to preach in Greece or Rome—to say nothing of their little troubles with the *literati* of Judea. As regards obedience to THE MASTER whose last Commandment these troublesome missionaries are trying to carry out, *that* may be all very well in theory, but not in practice; and as to a Chinese St Stephen, they have neither interest in nor sympathy with any such, even when his martyrdom is enacted almost at their doors!

To an unbiassed stranger like myself, continually receiving kindness from all ranks and conditions of my fellow-countrymen, few things are more remarkable than the singular indifference of the majority of the mercantile community in oriental countries to all missionary matters, their attitude both towards missionaries and native Christians being generally that of cold neutrality. Indeed it seems a marvel how the two streams can flow, side by side, in a far country, with so wondrously little social blending—a curious position for the two great sections of a Christian community.

In the present instance, however, a very real interest has from the beginning been aroused, from the fact that the tenure of the

Mission lands in the city is precisely similar to that by which all the foreign community hold their ground on this hill of Nantai, overlooking the native streets; so if this sort of thing is to be allowed to go unpunished, the *literati* may any day bring hired mobs to prove that these large foreign houses disturb the *feng-shui* of the multitudinous dead whose graves lie all around us. If this idiotic plea is admitted as a sufficient reason to compel a British subject to leave a home occupied for twenty-nine years, it may be raised about any spot. Here there is no concession (*i.e.*, ground made over to foreigners, as at other ports)—only individual houses, most of which were built under pressure of the newly made (and then enforced) treaty. The very hill on which they stand is said by the Chinese to be the backbone of the Great Dragon, so there is no reason why the same cry should not be raised here any day.

When the United States Consul erected his flagstaff at this Consulate, a demand was made for its immediate removal on *feng-shui* grounds; but as he simply refused to listen to such rubbish, the people contented themselves with making an image of a little devil firing at the flagstaff. This still remains on a ridge-pole near here, and is supposed to neutralise the evil!

So well do the foreign residents here realise the danger of yielding to these outcries, that soon after the Wu-Shih-Shan outrage (aware that such matters are apt to be slurred over) they deemed it necessary to take personal action in the matter, by sending a memorial on the subject, signed by all the leading merchants of Foo-Chow, to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs,[1] expressing their sense of the gravity of this premeditated outrage, their knowledge of its having been connived at by the Chinese officials, their conviction of the validity of the Church Mission title-deeds, and their hope that in obtaining ample redress for the injuries inflicted on the Church Missionary Society, steps might be taken to convince the Chinese authorities of Foo-Chow that the treaty rights of her Majesty's subjects cannot be violated with impunity.

So far, however, from any redress having been obtained, the case has now assumed the phenomenal form of this extraordinary lawsuit, whereby an unprincipled gang of anti-foreign conspirators are suffered to invoke English law in justification of felony, and the aggrieved missionaries, having first been burnt out of their house, are now required to secure legal counsel for their defence! Of course every merchant on Nantai knows that this precedent of

[1] Lord Salisbury.

submission to *feng-shui*-ite mob-law applies with equal force to every foreigner holding land or house property, so day by day each move of either side—the Mission or the Chinese—is watched with keen interest, for this is regarded as a great test case, and every one is anxious to see how it will end.

The Chinese officials have unfortunately a strong and well-founded impression that the members of this Mission need not hope for support from their own Consul, who in fact has repeatedly and openly expressed both to English and American residents his hope that they will be compelled to abandon their premises in the city, and furthermore, by a singularly incongruous combination of ideas, suggests the probability that the Chinese authorities may testify their joy at the expulsion of the Mission by presenting to the foreign community a piece of land suitable for a Race-Course! —a form of barter which some of the most secular members of the community declare would really be "obtaining the much-desired Race-Course at too great a price"!!

That the question of the Race-Course has actually been mixed up in the terms of compensation demanded for the outrage, has been distinctly stated both to Englishmen and Americans here and in Shanghai by wondering Chinese officials! Certainly this is rather a singular way to deal with the interests of a great English company, even if it is only Ecclesiastical!!

CHAPTER XIX.

AN EXTRAORDINARY TRIAL.

A calm Sunday—Visits to Wu-Shih-Shan—Choice selection of sites—New interpretation of old laws of custom—Acquisition of the Race-Course—One injustice leads to others—Persecutions—Better days—Good out of evil.

WITH MRS FRY, BESIDE THE RIVER,
PALM-SUNDAY, *April* 5, 1879.

PALM-SUNDAY! A hot, still, very oriental day. We have enjoyed the greater part of it sitting on the verandah watching the shipping and wondrously clear reflections, for it is a great calm.

In the forenoon we went to the English chapel for foreign residents on the isle, which is quite independent of the Missions, but

there were so very few people present that the chaplain announced that the sermon he had intended to preach would be unsuitable, so he dismissed the congregation![1] This being the only service of the day, we have had ample leisure to enjoy the river.

Oh how lovely this evening has been! Mount Kushan looming grand through the warm sunset haze, and then dreamy moonlight pictures—great curiously-shaped junks floating past with the tide—swiftly and silently, like spirits, or like a scene in some strange pantomime. A number of sampans lie moored along the shore, right under our windows, but all their people are asleep, and perfect silence reigns.

Would that all life might be equally peaceful! Unfortunately that seems too good a boon for this world, and many of my best friends here—those of all others who most desire peace—are at present forced into a daily strife which is terribly hard upon them. I mean, of course, all the members of the English Church Mission, who, day by day, are being worried almost past endurance by the various moves of all their antagonists.

I have been several times to visit them in their home on the Wu-Shih-Shan hill—such a pleasant home, and commanding such a beautiful view of the city and all the country beyond—quite an ideal spot for their work, well raised above the filthy town (wherein most of them work all day, but have the unspeakable boon of coming home at night to a clean atmosphere, right in the pathway of every breeze). Such surroundings of grey rock, grassy hill, and shady trees must be an unspeakable boon in the heart of a great city, and their advantages are plainly shown by the fresh healthy look of all the nice Chinese girls in the boarding-school of the Female Education Society. I have never in any country seen a more satisfactory, happy-looking lot. It is also the centre of work of the English Medical Mission.

It does seem hard, indeed, that these useful societies should be subjected to so much annoyance and persecution. The mere notion of the lawsuit is bad enough, but they have secured a loyal defender in Mr Nicholas Hannen, the Crown Advocate, brother of Sir

[1] This very easy-going system of non-attendance at even one service a-week cannot impress the Chinese mind with a deep sense of European appreciation of Church privileges! Hence such an incident as I noticed last Sunday morning, when a large garden near the church swarmed with the rather picturesque but exceedingly shabby retainers of a big Chinese official, who (well knowing the importance supposed to attach among Christians to Sunday observance) had appointed the hour of service as that in which to meet European gentlemen for the discussion of business relating to the Great Trial.

James[1]—and as every one here agrees in the conviction that by no possibility could the case go against the Mission in a fair trial, it seems that the best thing to do would be just to let it go on, and thus the Society's rightful possession of their ground will be established beyond question.

This, however, is by no means the view taken by the Chinese, who are confident that in the hands of their English counsel, their unrighteous cause is secured. Every delay and every concession has made the *literati* and small gentry more determined to oust the Mission from the city, and day by day they wax more insolent.

Ever since Sir Thomas Wade arrived at the Consulate here, he has been most anxious to effect a compromise, by inducing the Mission to resign all their rights to the excellent site on the breezy hill which they have held since 1850, in exchange for such a site as the Chinese may be disposed to offer. As the representatives of the C.M.S. cannot possibly abandon their right to remain in the city, the alternative offered is a home in the foul, overcrowded streets. What that means, at its very best, can scarcely be realised by any one not personally acquainted with the horrors of a Chinese city. The site they now have is the best and airiest in the city; nevertheless, for peace' sake, and in compliance with the strongly urged wishes of the British Minister (who considers St Paul's adherence to his rights as a Roman citizen wholly inapplicable to the case of a British subject!), the members of the Mission agreed to exchange their site for one on any other hill, or even rising ground, within the walls.

But the Chinese are not nice people to deal with when they once detect a tendency to undue compliance, which invariably produces corresponding arrogance, and I am told by an unbiassed English merchant (whose very unusual tastes have made him familiar with the native town) that the sites which have been offered have simply been a succession of insults, each being more impossible than the last. The first was on the edge of a foul stagnant canal, which receives the drainage of the whole dense mass of native houses all around—a canal which all through the burning summer sends up a sickening miasma of poisonous Chinese stench. (Foreigners, if compelled even to pass near such places, hurry on, with handkerchief covering mouth and nose!) This site was highly recommended, because the canal would afford such excellent facilities for drainage!

[1] Another brother, Mr Charles Hannen, holds a high position here, under the Imperial Government, in the Chinese Customs Service.

As it was manifestly impossible for the Mission to agree to this exchange, they were, a few days later, summoned to consider the merits of another still fouler spot in the heart of the city, which is simply a collection of the most revolting pools of sewerage—in fact, for ages has been nothing else—and all through the rainy season the whole neighbourhood is covered with water. To this choice spot the harassed and disheartened clergymen were led, with the assurance that the Chinese officials would fill up these pools and make quite a nice site of it!

As the victims could not see it quite in that light, another delightful site was offered, and next day they were led to the bank of a stagnant pool, 300 feet long by 70 broad, which receives all the drainage of another dense mass of Chinese houses in the very heart of the city. Nothing short of practical experience can convey any notion of the foul filth of these crowded streets, and their endless successions of fearful smells, of which one never-failing supply is diffused by the economical customs of the Chinese with regard to night-soil, which at all hours of the day is carried through the streets in uncovered buckets (slung from bamboos on men's shoulders) to be spread over the neighbouring fields.

The foreign residents who are not missionaries, think it bad enough if business compels them occasionally to be carried through the streets in a chair, and *few of the ladies here have ever been inside the city gates!* With regard to these peculiarly loathsome spots which are offered as suitable homes for English ladies and children, with the flourishing schools of healthy Chinese country girls, the doctors affirm, and common-sense certifies, that it would be fatal for foreigners to attempt to live on any one of them—one pleasing item to be considered being the fact that these streets are never free from smallpox!

It was, of course, impossible for the representatives of the C.M.S. to accept of such an exchange on behalf of the Society. After this the small gentry waxed insolent, and refused to hear of any compromise short of the expulsion of the Mission from the city, and now placards have been stuck all over the town stirring up the people to destruction of all churches, and expulsion of all foreigners, declaring their own mandarins to be a set of children, and that neither they nor the soldiers are to be feared. In fact, the Wu-Shih-Shan outrage is but one proof of the hatred of all foreign influence by this faction, which, gaining nothing by trade, fears only the loss of its own power.

Further negotiations being now impossible, the lawsuit is to take its course.

This final crisis has developed rapidly, for the friendly Chinese, who know every turn of affairs in the city, maintain that only last month, when the Viceroy and great mandarins heard that the British Minister was coming in person, they were fully prepared to concede such terms of restitution as they supposed he would certainly demand.

I need scarcely say that all these details are matters of intense interest to every one here, of whatever nationality, so extraordinary is the position of a great British society thus compelled to defend itself before an English judge against the accusation of red-handed incendiaries, acting on the directions of an eminent English lawyer!

Note.—Ere this trial came off I had left Foo-Chow, and was at Ningpo on a visit to Bishop Russell, when tidings reached him of the end of "The Great Wu-Shih-Shan Case"—tidings of great surprise and sorrow.

I also received various letters from friends at Foo-Chow, all of whom had watched the trial with keen interest. As these letters exactly coincided in all their details with those received from other persons by Bishop Russell, I may assume that they were accurate, and I shall therefore quote some extracts from that of a totally unbiassed American.

. . . . . .

"The trial is over, and though the verdict is not yet formally given, the judge has left us no room to doubt that his decision will result in the expulsion of the missionaries from the city. We are all amazed at a verdict which has only been made possible by allowing technicalities of English law, never previously heard of in China, to be dragged into the question in a most extraordinary and utterly unprecedented manner, so as to bear in direct opposition to the Chinese custom regarding all land leases.

"The ground on which the trial was at first based was the charge of encroachment, but that accusation broke down utterly and was abandoned, so the question was then shifted to the legality of the lease—which lease was signed by two directors of the temple, for, and in the presence of, the whole body of directors, and is worded precisely as Chinese leases always are. Strange to say, though the month and year are always entered, a blank is invariably left where *the day* of occupation would naturally be

entered.[1] This is the invariable custom, nevertheless the judge announced in court that he would declare the lease void on this ground!

"There was no jury, so the verdict rests entirely in the hands of the judge,[2] who, as you are aware, only arrived in China a few months ago, after long residence in Sierra Leone, consequently he can know little of Chinese custom. During the trial he resided at the Consulate, and it can be no breach of charity to say that the tone of feeling there is not favourable to the missionaries.

"From the very beginning of the trial the judge showed a decided bias against them, and indulged in most uncalled-for remarks, implying that the statements upon oath of these highly respected clergy of the Church of England were not to be relied upon.

"In the same strain the English counsel for the Chinese, having taken the deposition of a Buddhist priest (who was proved to have absconded with 500 dollars—paid in advance by Mr Wolfe to the temple, for land—and to have become a Taouist priest in order to escape the Buddhists, and who did not scruple what lies he told to cover this transaction), declared that in the statements of the two ministers of religion it was clear that the truth lay with the Buddhist! Much more was added of the same nature.

"In short, the manner in which these British gentlemen have been addressed in presence of the Chinese (while these have all along been treated with most marked consideration), has made all who value even-handed justice indignant, and you know how readily the Chinese mark and interpret the smallest symptoms of official discourtesy as a proof that they may readily adopt the same course.

"It certainly has been a remarkable experience to find British ingenuity devising and teaching the Chinese new lessons in the art of amalgamating English and Chinese law for the oppression of the Church of England Mission!" . . .

Extract from another letter from an American:—

"*April* 4, 1880.

. . . "The English Mission is now entirely dislodged from Wu-Shih-Shan. Its houses there are almost pulled down, and the

[1] It is so in all the leases held by Bishop Russell in North China, and in those of all other persons whom I have heard speak on the subject.

[2] Mr French, Chief Judge of Her Majesty's Supreme Court in China.

ground is undergoing purification by the continual burning of candles and joss-paper!

"SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH THE OUSTING OF THE MISSIONARIES, THE LONG-COVETED RACE-COURSE HAS BEEN SECURED, as you will see by the enclosed clipping from the Foo-Chow paper!"

For upwards of two years more the Church of England continued subject to much persecution, and the workers were nearly worn out with ceaseless harassing anxieties. They deemed themselves fortunate, however, in being allowed to retain their three churches in the city, and in being suffered to go thither unmolested to aid the native clergy and catechists in ministering to their oppressed flocks, but all other property in the city was taken from them.

For a while they were compelled to disband their theological students, having no place in which to accommodate them. So soon, however, as it was possible, a native house was secured for their use near to the temporary quarters in which the refugees first found a resting-place after their compulsory removal to Nantai. These were very inconvenient, but endless difficulties were thrown in the way of any better site being obtained.

Better days were, however, in store. In 1883 Sir Harry Parkes was appointed H.B.M. Minister at Peking, and very shortly afterwards a marked changed was evident in the attitude of the Chinese officials at Foo-Chow.[1] Various provincial difficulties of long standing were rectified, and confiscated churches restored. Moreover, an excellent site in a very good and healthy situation in the open country was offered to the Mission in exchange for that which they had purchased. Pecuniary gifts from sympathetic friends supplemented the small sum which had been paid by the Chinese officials as compensation for the burnt college, and by the close of the year an excellent building was completed, with accommodation for fifty students, each provided with a separate small room. To the college is attached a chapel, seated for 250 persons, and the very first service herein held was the ordination to priest's orders of the Rev. Ngoi-kai-ki, an excellent clergyman, and, moreover, an Honorary Mandarin of the fifth Military degree (I note this, because, as yet, so few men of any social standing have joined

[1] Alas! for all British interests in China, but doubly grievous for the cause of Christian Missions, was the bitter news received in London on Sunday, 22d March 1885, announcing that Sir Harry Parkes had that morning died at Peking from rapid typhus fever.

the Christians). It is the old story here as in Judea, "Have any of THE RULERS of the people believed?" Mr Ngoi has had to face many a trouble on account of his Christian faith, not the least to a Chinaman being the official annulling of his hard-earned literary B.A. degree. Moreover, for many years his wife was a bitter opponent of the Christians, and her unkindness made his home very miserable. Gradually, however, she quite changed, became a most devout Christian, and she and her three children were baptised together.

Mr Ngoi, who has hitherto been in charge of a country parish, has now been appointed Native Principal of the new boarding-school for boys, which has been built near the college, also on an excellent site, with accommodation for sixty boys, a first-rate play-ground, and comfortable quarters for masters. An admirable feature of this school is the opening of an industrial school in connection with it; so that the boys, having devoted half of each day to study, may in the other half be instructed in useful trades. Thus when their school days are over, they will be fitted to start in life as able Christian tradesmen. Such of the elder boys as show a distinct talent or inclination for work as teachers, are allowed to give up attending these industrial classes, that they may devote their full time to study.

The Girls' Boarding-school shares in the general comfort of ample space, and forty boarders give good promise of future influence in many homes.

A commodious new house has also been built for women who come to study with a view to retiring to their own villages as Bible-women—a class greatly needed, and of extreme usefulness. Of course in China women can only be reached by women, more especially women of the upper and middle classes. Hence the somewhat unusual feature of finding that *the converts number considerably more men than women.* The baptisms in the Fuh-Kien districts for the year 1882 show a return of *two hundred and two men and only sixty-two women.* It is hoped that the work of the Bible-women in Chinese homes will soon show a very different return. Twenty-four such women are now under instruction by the wives of the clergy.

Now that all the prolonged vexations of the persecutions and the Unjust Trial are well passed, those most deeply concerned are able to believe that all has been over-ruled for good, and that in some respects (notwithstanding the extra fatigue entailed on the clergy by the long daily walks to their work in the city) the

position of the Mission has actually been benefited. It is found that the students—men, boys, and girls—work better in the purer atmosphere, and there is space for further overflow should numbers increase.

Moreover, proximity to the foreign settlement has distinct advantages in bringing the subject home to the notice of many who formerly scarcely realised what work was actually going on, who probably had never in their lives entered a Chinese school or chapel, and whose sole ideas of native Christians were derived from having once had some very dishonest servant *who called himself* a Christian. Now that the Mission is so well established in the immediate neighbourhood of the foreign community, its existence is self-evident, and creates an interest which finds expression in such kindly acts as occasional treats to the children, and largely increased sympathy with the long-tried members of the Mission.

The same happy change is also very apparent throughout the province. At numerous villages (where till very recently a foreign teacher had to face the probabilities of insult and riot, and where, for perhaps a number of years, one solitary convert alone held his ground in spite of all persecution) there are now flourishing congregations of from fifty to a hundred persons. And whereas five years ago there were only half-a-dozen little country village schools, there are now upwards of forty, with a prospect of considerable increase of the number of scholars, of whom fully one-half are children of entirely heathen families, but are nevertheless committed by their parents to the careful training of the hitherto hated and despised Christians!

As a matter of course, the bombardment of the Arsenal by the French at once raised a fresh storm of persecution, which, however, the mandarins did their utmost to allay. It was deemed expedient to recall all foreign teachers within the limits of the Treaty Ports, but the converts thus left to themselves held their ground bravely, and (notwithstanding the bitter taunts and contempt of their heathen neighbours, who declared them traitors to their country, whom it would be well to exterminate) they went calmly on their usual way, all Church services being held with accustomed regularity, and well attended.

It may be that in years to come, *when China has taken her place as* THE GREATEST CHRISTIAN NATION IN THE WORLD, such troubles as these will be remembered, as we in Britain remember the persecutions of the earliest Christians by our pagan ancestors.

But meanwhile, as regards the present position of the Church in

this province, it would appear that here, as elsewhere, the darkest hour preceded the dawn—

POST TENEBRAS, LUX!

Moreover, seeing that the surest test of vitality in any branch of the Christian Church is the readiness with which it obeys the MASTER's last Commandment, to carry HIS Gospel to further lands (an obligation which Britain was so slow to realise, that until the beginning of the present century her mission work was almost *nil*), it is specially interesting to learn that this young Native Church of Foo-Chow has already made her first effort in this direction. No sooner was the possibility of access to Corea made known, than the Chinese Christians of Foo-Chow solemnly set apart two of their number to commence a mission to the Hermit Land. Apparently the men selected were not the fittest for the work, for one has already returned disheartened. But it is much that the duty has been so fully recognised and the first effort made.

Note.—Since the above was penned, the Chinese Government has taken a step of the utmost importance—namely, the proclamation, first in the spring, and again in the autumn of 1886, of an edict of full toleration for Christianity, informing the people that the sole purpose of preaching and establishing Mission chapels is to exhort men to do right, and that they who embrace Christianity do not cease to be Chinese subjects, but are entitled to claim full protection from the laws of their own land. This Imperial edict has been so extensively proclaimed, that it is understood that special instructions to that effect were despatched to every governor in the eighteen provinces.

The statement that converts do not relinquish their nationality, points to the gravest of all causes of persecution — as usual, a purely political motive — namely, that France, making mission work a cloak for political aggression, claimed that all Roman Catholic converts should be under French protection, and exempt from local jurisdiction and taxation! Hence, at the outbreak of the Franco-Chinese war in 1884 (see footnote, chap. vi.), the lives of Christians in all parts of the Empire were embittered by the people who, not being able to discriminate between foreigners of divers nationality, assumed all Christians to be adherents of France, and traitors to their own country. This was the true cause of the terrible persecution at Canton, and of the frightful

massacres in Annam in October 1885, when upwards of 35,000 persons were put to death, churches, schools, hospitals, and asylums pillaged and burnt to the ground, the Roman Catholic Mission, which it had taken so many years to create, being thus utterly crushed. Of the entire Christian population only 6000 escaped, and were conveyed to safe quarters at Saigon.

The perfect toleration enjoyed in China by men of all manner of creeds—Buddhist, Mohammedan, Confucian, and Taouist—clearly proves that the spirit of the nation is in favour of liberty of conscience in matters of religion. Hence the firm resolution evinced to sever the political connection between the Roman Catholic Missions and France, and then afford full protection to the converts themselves. No sooner, therefore, had the Pope established his own representative at the Court of Peking, and disclaimed all right to French protection for his spiritual children, than this edict has been proclaimed.

In some provinces it is given at greater length and with more detail than in others, but all agree in the main points, as proclaimed at Shanghai, where the Governor, Kung, explains that "under the Treaties, missionaries have the right to lease ground and houses, and to travel about and preach, their sole aim being the inculcation of the practice of virtue. Such of the subjects of China as wish to become converts may lawfully do so, and so long as they abstain from evil-doing, there is no law prescribing inquisition into or prohibition of their action. By Imperial edict all missionary chapels are to be sedulously protected." "Bear in mind that when missionaries live in the midst of your villages, you and they are mutually in the relation of host and guest. Under ordinary circumstances it is your foremost duty to act towards them with courtesy and forbearance. From the date of this proclamation any lawless vagabonds who make trouble or stir up strife without a cause, shall be punished with the utmost rigour of the law; no mercy will be shown. So BEWARE!"

CHAPTER XX.

JUNKS AND SAMPANS.

Trade on the Bund—Rowing junks—Odd vessels—Religious services—A gay funeral barge—Sampan life—Contrast English canal-boats—The Roman Catholic Mission—Easter morning—High Mass—Easter Psalms—Among the junks—Temple-theatre.

Chez MRS FRED. FRY,
BESIDE THE RIVER MIN,
April 7, 1879.

BEING on the very brink of the water, this is a most delightful house from which to watch all the endless combinations of picturesque boat and quay life. The latter includes a good deal of street trade—many girls with boxes of pretty silken artificial flowers come to tempt the sampan women, and barbers carrying their stock-in-trade in two ornamental red cases, wait for skulls to scrape. I observe that they use no soap!

But the eye does not linger long on the shore, for the attractions of the river are manifold. At certain states of the tide the stream is literally covered with native vessels of all shapes and sizes, silently gliding up stream or down, as the case may be. It is so extraordinary to watch large junks coming down the river, mid-stream, propelled only by two gigantic sculls, one on each side of the ship, and each worked by about a dozen men. The end of this huge oar is attached to the junk by a strong leathern thong, and the scull works round and round, somewhat on the principle of a screw.

All the time the men are at this, or any other work involving combined labour—such as rowing, or dragging a heavy cart—they keep up a ceaseless chorus. One chants a long story, probably describing the events of the day, and at regular intervals all join in a shout of "Hei-yei!" occasionally varied by a shower of "Yoi haie ai ah!" It sounds as if the song must be a serious additional labour, but, like the cheery choruses of Jack Tar, it appears really to assist work.

There are generally a multitude of singularly picturesque junks lying at anchor just below the great Bridge of Ten Thousand Ages —the Wan-Show-Keaou—and I have several times spent hours of delight rowing about among these to select the most striking group; and then, the house-boat being securely moored at the point thus

chosen, I have been able to sketch in perfect peace, undisturbed by even the most friendly crowds.

But no brush—certainly not mine—could convey any correct impression of these strange scenes—these extraordinary combinations of form and colour. Here we have a whole flotilla moored side by side, and we look up at the extraordinary high sterns, so fantastic in shape, and covered with brilliant pictures of huge birds and gruesome dragons, or groups of mythological scenes. Emerald green, scarlet and crimson, white and gold, sienna and madder, and prussian blue, are so freely used, that even the gorgeous and very varied banners can scarcely excel the brilliancy of the vessel. But the overhanging stern and huge unwieldy rudder cast deep shadows which are carried down in the reflections, and the grey granite bridge, and grey and white clouds softening the blue sky and the distant hills, harmonise the whole. The great rudder (whose size atones in some measure for the exceedingly small keel) is perforated, so as to offer less resistance to the water.

The prow of these vessels is shaped and painted to represent the face of a gigantic and most gaudy fish, with huge staring eyes, and the heavy anchor hangs from its mouth. Very quaint, too, are the huge sails of brown or yellow matting, or white cotton, supported by cross-ribs of bamboo. After a wet night, all the sails are run up to dry at early morning, and when half-furled, the bamboo ribbing is singularly suggestive of the wing of the flying-fish, from which doubtless the idea was first taken. The great masts are of one solid piece of wood—no attempt at scientific mast-building! As nothing in China is left to individual taste or caprice, even the very varied colouring of the junks is all regulated by law, those of different provinces being distinguished by a red, green, or white border, on a black ground, round the bulwarks. Those belonging to this province are green-bordered. The hull is generally white, affording a good surface for the emblematic phœnix which is invariably represented as standing on a rock surrounded by tempestuous waves, thus symbolising safety. It is incumbent on all shipowners to repair their vessels every second year—rather a serious business, considering how elaborate is their decoration.

Now we may change our position, so as to watch the great timber-junks taking on their cargo. I say *on* advisedly, for it is all tied on outside, and only the stem and stern of a laden vessel are visible, so great is the bulk of timber fastened to her on either side: of course she thus becomes exceedingly buoyant, for the cargo is self-supporting, floating on its own account.

What a pity it is that words should be so utterly powerless to convey any idea of form and colour! Though I have done my best to give you some notion of the strange river scenes which so fascinate me, I know that it is quite impossible for you really to form any conception of their brilliancy and quaintness.

Especially attractive as scenic effects, though wellnigh maddening to the ear, are the frightfully noisy religious services whereby the crew commend themselves to the Sea Dragon and to the goddess Tien-how, or else to Loong-moo, the Dragon's mother, when a laden junk is on the eve of sailing. The crew assemble sometimes on the bows, sometimes on the very high stern of the vessel, which is a wonderful arrangement of carving and colour. A temporary altar is erected, on which are spread all manner of offerings, and beside it kneels the leader of the ceremonies, probably the skipper himself, while one stands forward uplifting a sort of brazier full of blazing joss-paper, which he holds up towards the sun, while others produce an ear-splitting din on gongs and cymbals.

During the service the whole vessel, but especially the stern, is decorated with banners of every shape and every conceivable device. Finally, the offerings are taken from off the altar and are cast into the sea to propitiate the Sea Dragon, whose protection having been thus invoked, the junk starts on its seaward journey. One notable feature in the sacrifice is the slaughter of a fowl; part of its blood is sprinkled on the deck, and part on pieces of "joss-paper," which are then affixed to the door-posts and lintels of the cabin.

These Chinese sailors do their best to disprove the European proverb, "The danger past, and God forgotten," for on reaching their destination, their first care is to proceed to the temple of Tien-how on land, and there give thanks, and present thank-offerings, which include samples of the cargo. Thus on some of the isles of this coast, where fish-curing is carried on, it is customary for the sailors to present small red bags full of salt, each bag bearing the name of the donor. These are heaped upon the altar of the goddess.

These sailors, like those of other lands, have their special pet superstitions. They are sorely afraid of evil spirits, whom they believe to flit about on the waters and on the breezes. When becalmed, they whistle for the wind, just like European sailors; and they have notions of luck concerning ravens, which sometimes alight on the rigging, exactly corresponding with the ordinary respect for the albatross. To shoot a raven would be deemed a heinous nautical offence.

Besides the great three-masted junks, which are the giants of the river, a thousand lesser craft ply to and fro, giving life to the whole scene. Here come floating down boats laden with red crockery jars—jars like those in which are stored ancestral bones when brought from afar. There are fishing-boats with what appears in the distance to be a most picturesque triangular brown awning, but which turns out to be nets spread so as to dry. Just beyond lie several cormorant boats, with the demoniacal-looking birds perched like the familiar spirits of the curious-looking object beneath the huge bamboo hat.

Now more timber-rafts approach, bringing fresh stores from the mountain forests to be here consigned to the great junks; and house-boats, each with its pleasant company of holiday-makers.

And now a very picturesque boat floats silently by, laden with many blue-clothed people, and a large object draped with scarlet, and ornamented with green boughs. It is a pleasant bit of rich colour, and its reflections mingle with those of the bright blue sky and hills, so there is nothing about it to suggest that it is really a funeral party.

Ere long another funeral floats by, but of this the mourners are all clothed in white, and some wear sackcloth. Here, too, the coffin is covered with a scarlet pall, and from the stern droop green branches, festooned with scarlet cloth, and beautiful white banners embroidered with green dragons.

Here, there, and everywhere lie the pretty little sampans, some moored to the shore, others busily plying to and fro across the river, earning small coin by carrying passengers. This boat life is to me a source of endless interest.

In no other condition of life have I seen such practical proof of the old truism, that "man wants but little here below." Here the "little" is a small boat about the size of two four-post beds, set end to end, and covered in at night by a series of telescopic sliding-roofs of bamboo matting. In these very close quarters a whole family stow themselves away, and contrive to live in marvellous harmony—not only a man and his wife, and their children, but frequently the grandparents also, for here they are born, they marry, and they die; it is the only home they know, and though the men may go away to work on the junks, this is the "home, sweet home," to which they long to return.

Here they all cook and sleep and worship—for no matter how tiny the boat, the family altar is never crowded out. It occupies the place of honour in the stern of the boat, and through the day

it is protected by a little sliding-door, which is drawn aside at the hours of worship, revealing the household gods and miniature ancestral tablets, which are coloured red, the names of the dead being inscribed in gilt characters. Though these people are so poor that it is all they can do to earn their daily rice, the very poorest contrive to lay aside a few cash to buy a handful of flowers to lay before the little image of either Tien-how, the Queen of Heaven, or the Goddess of Mercy with the young Child, and a few sticks of incense to burn, when at sunrise and at sunset the family commend themselves specially to her care. In the evening some hang up a paper-lantern on which the name of one of the gods is inscribed in large characters—not a costly offering, but in their case quite in the proportion of "the two mites."

You would naturally imagine that the crowded boats must be dirty and perhaps full of fleas. On the contrary, their cleanliness is simply incredible. There is never a dirty corner in a sampan. Every crevice is alike kept scoured, so that not a speck of dirt is to be seen; and what with paint, oil, varnish, and "elbow-grease," these little homes are as spick and span in their way as a Japanese tea-house; and these sampan children are just as clean, and as quaint, and as preternaturally good, as the delightful children of Japan. The youngest treasure of the family is generally strapped on to its mother's back while she sculls the boat, and the "deposed king" is secured from drowning by a long cord fastened round his waist, and a small buoy attached to his back, so that if he should happen to tumble overboard, he can easily be fished up again.

So the foreigner who has a sampan to take him across the river, or to some of its countless points of interest, is scarcely conscious that while he sits in state beneath the principal bamboo awning, half-a-dozen grave little persons, with curiously shaven heads, are stowed away beneath a smaller awning astern, beside the long steer-oar, which is probably worked by their tidy mother, in the neatest "Bloomer" dress of indigo-coloured stuff—a comfortable blouse and short wide trousers reaching to a little below the knee —and bare feet—her glossy black hair always neatly dressed and ornamented by some fancy pin or bright artificial flower.

These sampan women look the very picture of ruddy health and good-temper, and their little ones take after their parents. If their wardrobes are not over well supplied, they certainly are clean, and kept well aired, long bamboos acting as drying-posts, from which, banner-like, flutter the blue household garments. There is also a corner of the roof reserved for a few flower-pots, for even in

these floating homes the Chinaman's love for plants and talent for gardening assert themselves.

What astonishes me most of all is the multitude of these boats, which literally seem to be as the sands of the sea. Wherever I have yet been there is the same swarm, and I am told it is the same at every town on every great river throughout this vast Empire. At Canton I was told that there alone the sampan population is estimated at three hundred thousand persons—*i.e.*, just thrice as many as the whole canal population of Britain.[1]

I suppose that till Mr George Smith told us about these last, few of us realised that we even owned such an item as 25,000 house-boats (or barges), nor even that Britain possessed 4800 miles of river and canal as the water-way on which they ply; but one thing patent to the most careless glance is the squalid misery and dirt and degradation of life on board of such boats, and all I have known or read concerning the canal-boats of Britain comes back to my mind in most sad contrast when looking on these bright happy families.[2] And yet the wages of the former would appear boundless wealth to the latter, who toil all day so cheerily for the very minimum of life's necessaries. Monsignor Gentili, the Roman Catholic bishop, who is intimately acquainted with the sampan people, many of whom are members of his flock, tells me that often the whole earnings of a family by a day's fishing do not amount to more than twopence; and though the equivalent, forty cash, will certainly go farther than our twopence, we need scarcely wonder that after each meal the family purse is generally empty!

[1] See page 57.

[2] Humiliating indeed is the contrast between the canal population of Christian England and that of heathen China, as revealed by the few philanthropists who have so far gone out of their way as to attempt to humanise the former. Of course they have found some bright exceptions, but the majority were ignorant of the very first elements of Christianity, and indeed of humanity—more brutally degraded than the most untutored of savages. It is not very long since a canal boatman was proved to have wilfully turned away from the cries of a drowning man because there was no certainty of reward for saving life, whereas he could surely claim a reward of five shillings for every dead body recovered from the canal!

In the dingy cabins of these dark, dirty barges, in an atmosphere redolent of blasphemy and immorality, there were found stowed away about 60,000 British children, poor untaught little ones—over-worked, beaten, cursed!—whose sole training consisted in the ready blows and the foul words so freely showered upon them. No domestic altar nor morning and evening worship for these—as for "the heathen Chinese." "Children in canal boats don't say prayers," said one of these poor little ones to a friend who fain would have taught her. And this was actually the condition of 100,000 of our own fellow-countrymen until, in the year 1882, Mr George Smith (the deliverer of unnumbered thousands of British children from the slavery of the brickfields and these canal-boats) succeeded, with infinite difficulty, in getting his "Emancipation" and "Education" Acts not only passed, but into working order.

The bishop gave me various other interesting particulars about the Roman Catholic Mission in China.

Long before China had begun to dream of making concessions to foreigners, devoted Jesuit missionaries continued to effect an entrance in the guise of Chinamen: some secured a footing by reason of their scientific attainments, and in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries their converts became exceedingly numerous, including a considerable number of men holding high official rank. One thing which gave these early teachers an immense advantage over those of later days is the fact that they were untrammelled by the heavy weight which now attaches to all English teachers, on account of their national connection with the opium trade.

Those early Catholic missionaries were as free to preach as had been those Indian missionaries who came here, B.C. 250, to spread the doctrines of Buddha, which were equally "foreign" to China, and, nevertheless, soon effectually took root in the Empire.

Nor were the Mohammedan preachers less "foreign" when they arrived here in the seventh century, and uncompromisingly declared the unity of God and the iniquity of idolatry. They too have overspread the Empire from Peking to Canton, having mosques everywhere, and rigidly adhering to their own faith. So numerous are they, that in some parts of the northern and western provinces no less than one-third of the inhabitants profess this creed, while *the total number of Chinese Mohammedans is estimated at thirty millions.*

The Jesuits made such good progress, that they might very well have secured a permanent and important position. But the usual rash blending of things temporal with spiritual seems to have first roused violent opposition, and terrible persecutions ensued, in which seventy French priests and many more of other nationalities were martyred.

Still, notwithstanding every edict and every attempt to suppress and expel them, they have bravely held their ground, and after the signing of the treaties they resumed the attack in good earnest. Now they reckon their native converts at upwards of one million,[1]

[1] A number so enormously in excess of the converts of all other Christian denominations may at first sight seem startling, even in view of nearly three centuries of work, and the larger number of workers. It must, however, be borne in mind that (although St Francis Xavier's wholesale baptisms, by sprinkling the gaping crowds on the banks of the Indian rivers, could scarcely count in the present day) the change from Buddhism to Catholicism is very much simpler than to unadorned Christianity.

For instance, how easy is the transition from the worship of either Tien-how-shing-moo, "the Holy Mother, Queen of Heaven," or that of the Goddess of Mercy

while their working staff consists of 41 bishops, 664 European priests, 559 native priests, 34 colleges, 34 convents—the latter representing both European and Chinese sisters. It is unfortunate that their very hostile attitude towards Christian teachers of all other denominations, and the consequent anti-Protestant instructions which they disseminate, verbally and in print, make it difficult for these to recognise them as true fellow-workers.

Easter Day.

The sampan people continue to afford me infinite interest, for so many boats lie moored close under our windows that we cannot avoid seeing them. The last thing at night, as I look out into the clear beautiful moonlight, they are for the most part calmly sleeping, though some few are always astir; and no matter how early I may awaken in the lovely dawn, they are all astir. Babies of all sizes are being washed, and dressed, and fed,—and they always look happy and bright,—and then the boats are scrubbed and made beautifully clean.

with the young Child, and the lilies and the dragon (sometimes serpent) under her feet, to that of the Holy Mother with the infant Saviour standing on the serpent's head. As to the whole company of Buddhist saints, with the golden glory encircling every head, they are scarcely to be distinguished from those of Christendom. The total suppression of the second commandment in the Roman Decalogue does away with all difficulties regarding the use of "graven images," and *as the Catholics have never published any Chinese translation of the Holy Scriptures*, their converts are in no danger of discovering too much on this or any other subject.

All that custom has endeared to the outward senses of the Buddhist he may retain in the Church of Rome. Use of images, rosaries, incense, holy water, ringing of consecrated bells, prostrations, fasting multiplied, reiteration of short prayers, a gorgeously vested and shaven priesthood, monasteries and convents, belief in Purgatory, intensely realistic pictures of the tortures of a material Hell—above all (that which is by far the most difficult for a convert to give up), ancestral worship in the form of Masses for the Dead, in services scarcely to be distinguished from those which he has ever believed to be the highest act of worship.

Moreover, the rule of life on various points is very much less strict than that required by Protestant teachers, and *faute de mieux*, obedience to Church rule is, in a multitude of cases, allowed to pass in place of intelligent worship. Especially as regards observance of Sunday is the law relaxed, the poor being allowed, by special papal dispensation, to work in their fields or their shops, after being present at Mass.

That a large proportion of the aforesaid million converts were really so only in name has been clearly proven by the fact that, during the late war with France, although many have nobly endured persecution even unto death, a multitude of the half-hearted have relapsed to idolatry, so that these numbers have shrunk to less than one-half. The Roman Catholic Church in China has paid dearly for the protection which France (while persecuting the Church in Europe) so zealously extends to all persons professing the faith in foreign lands, chiefly, it is to be feared, as a cloak for political intrigue. Consequently their interests are identified.

Now, however, a papal Legate has been sent to Peking, and there well received, the authorities declaring their willingness to recognise the Roman Catholic as an authorised religion, provided it is independent of French protection.

I had intended to attend their special Good Friday service at dawn in the Roman Catholic chapel, but was deterred by heavy rain and bitter cold. This morning, however, I was awakened ere daybreak by the noise of crackers being let off in token of rejoicing on board the sampans. I had heard these in honour of lords many and of gods many, but as a sign of Christian gladness it was certainly a novelty!

I got up and watched the river in the grey early light. All the boats and junk population were awakening, and the Christians dressing for early Mass. I have already described the regular costume of all the sampan women and girls. Those who can afford "a Sunday dress" treat themselves to a brighter blue, with white sleeves, when they look even cleaner and nicer than usual, as do also their charming little children, many of whom are the happy owners of a rosary, with a little crucifix, or a medallion of the Blessed Virgin.

I lingered so long watching the boats that all the most devout inmates went off to early Mass ere I was dressed, but I attended High Mass at 8.30, where there were about 500 of the sampan women on one side of the church, and 500 men on the other. A wooden partition down the middle of the church divides the women from the men, agreeably to the Chinese custom in this matter—a custom which is adhered to in some Protestant churches, but not in all. Here and there I observed a woman telling her beads very devoutly, but the majority were so busy chatting and soothing their babies, that the murmur of their voices wellnigh drowned the chanting of the Italian bishop and a staff of about ten priests, most of whom were Chinese. As to the congregation, they had evidently been taught that their presence was all that was required.

In the forenoon we went to the English Church in the foreign settlement. It is charmingly decorated all in white and green, with some irresistible touches of wistaria. Some parts of the beautiful service for the day, more especially the first and second Psalms for the day,[1] seemed as though they had been written to describe just such a season of trouble as the Mission Church here is now passing through—a Cry of Perplexity, changing to a Song of Deliverance. Numerically the congregation was scarcely suggestive of Easter, and the emptiness of the church at the Celebration was chilling.

[1] Ps. ii.; Ps. lvii.

Easter Monday.

I cannot learn what particular native festival is being celebrated just at present, but to-day there is great "joss-pigeon" (which, in the atrocious compound known as pigeon-English, means "God's business"). All the junks are adorned with huge flags and streamers, and green dragons are floating in every direction. We went for a most interesting row in and out among the shipping, and watched the picturesque though deafening worship on board the junks. Then we started to explore some of the Guilds, which we have not yet visited, and which are indicated by very tall red poles.

At one we found a very gorgeous Sing-Song going on, and a dense crowd, but a friendly old man (a stranger) gave us excellent seats in the mandarins' gallery. The play was extremely picturesque, as was also the whole scene, but very much what I have already described.

CHAPTER XXI.

SHANGHAI.

Native description of country round Shanghai — The foreign settlement— Boats and wheelbarrows—The *cangue*—The Bubbling Well—The native city—St Simon Stylites—Consecration of a Roman Catholic bishop—Roman Catholic Orphanage at Siccaway—Foundling Hospital.

ORIENTAL BANK, SHANGHAI,
Monday, 26th April.

LAST week I bade adieu with much regret to beautiful Foo-Chow and the many kind friends there, several of whom accompanied me to the Anchorage, where others met us, and we had a last most pleasant evening, after which my host (Mr Fry) escorted me on board the Europe, commending me to the special care of Monsignor Gentili, Evêque de Dionyse, Vicaire Apostolique de Fokien, who proved very good company.

Twenty-four hours' steady steam brought us to the bar of the yellow Yang-tze-Kiang, which can only be crossed at high tide, the bottom being too near the top, as our skipper remarked. So here we waited impatiently, finding small attraction in the hideous river and its dead-level shores, and rejoiced when at length we were able to steam on through the crowd of quaint junks, and

large ships and steamers of all nations, till we reached the great semicircle of handsome foreign houses, in one of which such hospitable welcome awaited me. Here already a week has slipped away, while many friends have so enfolded me in kindness as effectually to dispel my first dreary impressions of this great city. Of course nothing can make its dead-flat surroundings other than dismally hideous, and the contrast with the lovely country I have just left is marked indeed. In point of fact (as we may gather from its name, Shanghai signifying "upon the sea," from which it is now twenty-five miles distant), it is all a very recent alluvial deposit — formed by the ceaseless accumulation of mud washed down by the Great River and its tributaries. This level plain is intersected in every direction by a network of natural and artificial water-ways, whereon ply boats innumerable.

However useful for traffic may be these numerous creeks and canals, they are certainly not attractive in other respects, even in the estimation of the Chinese themselves—as shown in a native appeal to the charitable of Shanghai for funds in aid of "An establishment for gratuitous medical relief." The appeal remarks that the neighbouring country is very damp, and that portion of it which lies near the sea is salt, and even more damp than the interior.

It goes on to state that "In the Hwang-pu and Woo-sung rivers there are the day and night tides, but in the brooks and streams which join them, there being no ebb and flow of the tide, the water is still and stagnant, and acquires a greenish colour and a brackish taste; the water of the wells is also affected in a similar manner, and, as regards the people who live in these regions, the dampness moistens them, the wind shrivels them, the stagnant water soaks them, and they are thus rendered liable to disease."

In point of temperature it is very much warmer than when I touched here at Christmas, and I am told that during the five summer months the heat is most oppressive, and that even Chinese coolies are sometimes sun-struck. My naval friends say that on no other station have they suffered so severely as in this steaming atmosphere, where the thermometer sometimes marks 100° under shade of the awning.

The foreign settlement is as fine as handsome houses can make it. It is composed of three great districts—the English, the French, and the American. There is a solid, business-like look of wealth about this great gas-lighted river frontage of palaces which makes it a genuine relief to the artistic eye to find that it may

look down, even from these luxurious verandahs, on some items of purely native interest. First and foremost there is a class of brilliantly painted boats, wholly unlike any which I have seen elsewhere, and these are ceaselessly plying on the stream. And as if the road would not be outdone by the river, it has devised oddities peculiar to itself, and most attractive to the observer.

I have seen a wonderful variety of picturesque and grotesque vehicles in many lands, and I certainly thought that nothing could exceed the quaintness of some of the pony and bullock carriages of India. But there is a one-wheeled conveyance greatly in favour with the Chinese of Shanghai to which, I think, the palm must be awarded. The one large wooden wheel is the centre, on which the superstructure is built up—namely, a wooden framework on which it is just possible for two persons to sit, one on each side of the wheel, with the feet resting on a bar in front, and the arm on a support above the wheel. I have seen gorgeously dressed small-footed women, with jewels and fans, perched on this uncomfortable contrivance, and have tried it myself, but very quickly resigned my position as untenable!

The motive power is a Chinaman dressed in the ordinary blue blouse and short loose blue trousers. He propels the carriage by means of two handles, and balance is secured by a strong band which is passed over his neck and fastened to the ends of the handles. The fare must be infinitesimal, for half the coolies and servants who are sent on errands treat themselves to a hurl on this wheelbarrow, and you occasionally see a man going to market, sitting quietly smoking on one side of the wheel under the shadow of a large paper umbrella, while his pig is slung to the other side with its feet in the air, in the most cruelly apoplectic manner—or else his fowls and his vegetables are thus carried in large baskets. There are about fifteen hundred of these quaint vehicles ceaselessly at work in the settlement, so there are generally some of them to be seen.

Another essentially Chinese object which I have here seen for the first time, and which certainly cannot be classed as attractive, is a luckless thief undergoing the punishment of the *cangue*, which is a heavy square of wood worn as a collar, which divides so as to allow the head to enter, and is then padlocked officially. The name and offence of the culprit are inscribed on the board, and then the poor wretch is left all day chained to some public place, hungry and thirsty, while the idlers gather round and smoke (but never offer him a whiff!) Very often the Chinese *gamin* take

advantage of his helpless state to chaff him, and tickle his poor ears with a straw, knowing that his hands are useless for all scratching purposes, and the crowd look on and laugh. One poor wretch was on show near here for some hours. Another day I saw a whole gang thus adorned with the dreadful collar, all chained up near the police-station.

We have done the regulation afternoon drive to the Bubbling Well, the chief interest of which seems to be that it is the turning-point in a sort of Rotten Row drive, utterly devoid of beauty, even the fine trees which once clothed the country round having all been cut for firewood by the Triad army during its eighteen months' occupation of Shanghai in 1854-55.

To their destructive presence is also due the lack of buildings of special interest within the city, for at the time when they were dislodged by the Imperial troops, each party amused themselves by setting fire to various buildings in different parts of the town, the whole resulting in a terrible conflagration and a general looting. After this the Imperialist executioners had cheerful orgies, resulting in the decapitation of about two thousand of their prisoners, whose heads were carried in basket-loads to the city, and there fixed on poles, and so stuck up all round the walls, *pour encourager les autres!*

The city again suffered severely some years later, when it was attacked by the Taiping rebels, and the French deliberately set fire to a large district of the best Chinese houses, in case they should afford cover to the enemy.

Though my first impressions of the old city were not much in its favour, I have again been drawn thither in search of objects of interest; but though I have enlarged my experience since my first visit here before Christmas, I still think that the native city of Shanghai may claim the palm for dirt and bad smells in excess of those of any other city I have yet explored. However, under the excellent guidance of "a brither Scot," I ventured into the labyrinth of narrow filthy streets, and we found our way to a so-called tea-garden, where a house with roofs insanely curled up at the corners stands in the middle of a dirty pool, amid various odd long bridges. It seemed the regular lounge for crowds of idlers, who were gambling or watching conjurors and other catch-cash. As to gambling, it is an inborn passion with all this race: when other subjects fail, the number of pips in an orange will furnish matter for an exciting bet.

Then we went to see a place where great mandarins go and dine

in large halls, the grounds around being laid out in a labyrinth of rockwork. We entered the city by one great gateway, and then passed out by another, walking outside the old wall till we came to a cemetery where six hundred English soldiers were buried, who died here on their return from Peking—the mortality being attributed to bad quarters here.

There is one object of interest of which I did wish to see a specimen, but we failed to discover one. These are the Chinese representatives of St Simon Stylites. I am told that quite recently there were no less than four of these religious mendicants posted in various parts of Shanghai. Each of these had packed himself into a cage about 5 feet high by 3 feet square, the cage being then hoisted up by ropes and pulleys on to a light scaffolding of bamboos and tall poles. One of these erections was 40 feet high, and in it the wretched devotee had remained seven days and nights without food or drink, to excite all beholders to give alms. His object was to raise 2000 taels towards building a temple at Hang-Chow.

Probably he has collected his coin and taken himself off, for this method of soliciting the alms of the pious is very efficacious, especially when the collector shuts himself up in a kennel stuck full of long nails with the points turned inwards to prevent his getting any rest. Night and day he tolls a wearisome bell, that its wail may induce the passers-by to give him such a sum as may allow of one nail being withdrawn, thus purchasing for him a speedier hope of release![1]

We looked into some temples, but I confess that I here find heathenism shorn of all its usual interests. The picturesque elements are utterly wanting, and filth is rampant.

On the other hand, our own Church is here represented with a charm such as I have found nowhere else in the East; but I have already alluded to this very attractive feature of Shanghai.

Yesterday morning, however, I strayed to further pastures, being anxious to witness the consecration of the new Roman Catholic Bishop of Hong-Kong (Monseigneur Garnier), in the great cathedral at Tongkadoo, which is a suburb of Shanghai. I am told that about 80,000 of the 310,000 inhabitants of the city are adherents of the Romish Church, so the ceremony was one certain to excite great interest, and certainly it was most imposing—nothing being

[1] A self-elevated saint of this class at Allahabad devoted half a century to thus accumulating merit! *Vide* 'In the Himalayas and Indian Plains,' p. 88. By C. F. Gordon Cumming. Chatto & Windus.

omitted which could tend to impress the outward senses and attract a people accustomed to the elaborate ritual and ecclesiastical display of Buddhism.

A friend having kindly offered to escort me, we started in a steam-launch at about 7 A.M., and proceeded by river to Tongka-doo; then, leaving our boat, ten minutes' walk through a very low squalid district of the Chinese town brought us to the cathedral, round which immense crowds had assembled to see what they could of the great ceremonial. Already the interior was densely packed with about two thousand Chinese, all the men seated on one side and the women on the other. The middle aisle was guarded by about sixty Chinese soldiers, armed; others were ranged about the building, both within and without, carrying banners. There were many French officers present, all in full uniform —in short, nothing was neglected which could heighten the scenic effect. The whole cathedral was brilliantly decorated with rich embroideries, gay banners, flaunting Chinese flags bearing Christian mottoes, many gaily decked altars and pictures, and a canopy of the richest embroidery above the bishop's throne.

The great organ is considered a very wonderful instrument; we were informed that it was made *entirely* of bamboo pipes.[1] On the present occasion, however, the music was conducted by the St Cecilian Society of Portuguese singers, with their own band, and was excellent.

Though the church appeared crowded to overflowing, a word from the French Consul to one of the priests secured us excellent places. My companion was taken to a small side-gallery overlooking the altar, reserved for French gentlemen, and a seat was found for me with the French Hospital Sisters—pleasant-looking women, dressed in black, with large white Normandy caps. We were admirably placed for seeing the whole ceremonial.

Four bishops were present—namely, the new Bishop of Hong-Kong, Bishop Guierry of Ningpo, the Bishop of Dionisia (whose great diocese, Hupeh, which is about the central province of China, also includes Foo-Chow), and the Bishop of Titopolis. The two last named bear titles of ancient bishoprics, as is customary *in partibus infidelium*.

[1] We often little dream to what source we are primarily indebted for the enjoyments of our ordinary life. It appears that the use of the reed, which forms so essential a part of the harmonium, was taught to a Frenchman by a Russian, who had learnt it from a Chinaman in the beginning of this century. Thus this application of the bamboo, which is virtually a gigantic reed, is but a development of an ancient Chinese invention.

They entered in solemn procession, with about fifty priests, besides a multitude of acolytes. The display of gorgeous vestments was dazzling—the gold-embroidered copes and mitres. While Mass was being sung there was the usual symbolic putting off and on of vestments, which is so very distracting to the uninitiated and unsympathetic. On this occasion, however, the meaning was obvious. The new bishop put off the cope, and put on the symbolic sandals, the tunic, dalmatica, chasuble, and maniple, and assumed the pastoral staff.

During the Litany he lay prone on the altar steps. The Bishop of Ningpo as consecrator, and the other two bishops, laid hands upon him, and placed the Gospels on his head and shoulders. The choir sang *Veni Creator Spiritus*, while they anointed his head and hands. The Bishop of Ningpo then blessed the crozier and presented it; next he bestowed the episcopal amethyst ring, and a finely-bound copy of the Gospels. Finally, all the three bishops gave him the kiss of peace.

After the offertory, the new bishop offered two wax-candles, two loaves of bread, and two tiny casks of wine. Then the Celebration of the Mass was continued, the new bishop and the Bishop of Ningpo communicating.

After the blessing the Bishop of Ningpo blessed the mitre, and put it on the new bishop—also the episcopal gloves. He then led him to the throne under the canopy, where he seated himself, crozier in hand. Then all stood before the high altar, and the Bishop of Ningpo intoned the *Te Deum*, while the new bishop walked down the church and blessed the kneeling crowds.

Returning to the altar, he thanked the three bishops, knelt down three times, pronounced the Benediction, after which all the bishops unrobed. Then the whole procession, escorted by the Chinese soldiers and the banners, walked round the cathedral grounds, heralded by trumpeters and a company of ten drummers.

We thought the crowds appeared to be considerably impressed by the ceremonial, and we felt inclined to wish that the poverty of our own Missions did not necessitate such exceedingly ugly simplicity as that of the very bare chapels which are the best that can be provided by the majority of the native converts. These, however, are, as we have already seen, staunch men and true, indued with the stern determination and conviction which enables them to face the most cruel persecution, and in many cases has preserved them faithful unto death. Such converts as these are not much influenced by ecclesiastical ornament, and only desire a haven of rest where they

may meet to worship, if possible, without molestation. The rest may all come in time; nevertheless, there is deep signification in the old saying that "When the crozier became golden, the bishops became wooden," so perhaps those who most hope to see the spread of Christ's kingdom in China may be consoled for the lack of outward beauty.

Another thing here in connection with the Church of Rome which has greatly interested me is the Orphanage at Siccaway, in the neighbourhood of this city, where there are at present upwards of one hundred and sixty baby-girls. We drove there one afternoon, and were most courteously received by the Mother Superior and the kind Sisters, all robed in black, with simple black frilled bonnets. Pitiful were the stories they had to tell of these, their adopted children, poor little atoms, voluntarily cast away by their own parents—not, as is too often the case in other lands, because they are the children born to a heritage of shame (for the morality of Chinese women in general stands very high), but solely because they had the misfortune to be girls instead of boys—a subject on which I have already had occasion to speak.[1]

Moved with pity for the innocent lives thus doomed to destruction, and moreover seeing in their rescue an opportunity of at least securing for these poor little outcasts the privilege of Christian baptism, and furthermore a possibility of rearing them in the Christian faith so as to grow up and become useful working members of the Catholic Church, the Sisters at Siccaway announced their willingness to receive and tend all castaways who might be brought to their house. It is to be feared that multitudes of mothers still suffer their little ones to perish rather than take the small trouble involved in conveying them to the home thus ready to welcome them.

In some parts of China a similar work of mercy has led to the popular belief that the foreign women want to get the Chinese babies because their eyes are necessary to complete the loathsome ingredients of some witch's broth. This was the cry raised which led to the horrible massacre at Tien-tsin in 1871, in which no less than thirteen Sisters and two priests perished, and the cathedral was burnt. Several other Europeans, including the French Consul, were also murdered by the populace, goaded on by the fanatical *literati*. Since that time it has been deemed prudent to carry on the charge of Orphanages and other Church work in the interior of China, chiefly by means of native Sisters, "Vierges de la Sainte

[1] See p. 203 on Ancestor-worship.

Enfance," who are found to acquit themselves well in their difficult task.

Happily, near Shanghai, long contact with foreigners has taught the people to form a wiser judgment of their motives, and a good many women, who have not altogether crushed their maternal instincts, would be willing to hand over their infant daughters to the Sisters, provided that so doing cost them neither money nor trouble.

Of the babies which do reach this haven of rest, many arrive at the very point of death, and all are in the last stage of inanition. Many have evidently been systematically neglected from the moment of their birth—starved by their unnatural mothers; but even those which have received fair care for a little while, are often almost dying ere they are delivered to their new mothers.

For often a Chinese woman living some distance from the town, wearies of taking care of a baby so very unwelcome to its father and all its relations, and so, hearing of the extraordinary fancy of the white women for rearing other people's babies, she commits her little one to some boatman going down one of the canals or down the river, and charges him to deliver it to the Sisters. Very likely two whole days may elapse from the hour when the unnatural mother gives her nursling to this rough care ere it reaches its destination, and during all those long hours the wailing baby is left unnoticed and without food. Then when the boatman reaches Siccaway, without further ceremony he hands this poor morsel of humanity to the Sister at the gate. These babies are generally quite naked—and if perchance they have been wrapped in a bit of coarse cloth, the messenger invariably reclaims the cloth when he delivers up the baby.

The famished creature is, in many cases, committed to a hired wet-nurse, who receives good wages from the Orphanage—but so many of these women prove unfaithful to their trust, that the Sisters find that the babies they themselves rear by the bottle make far more rapid progress than those committed to Chinese nurses. We were taken round one large room, surrounded by neat comfortable cribs, in each of which lay what seemed to us to be a dying baby. Some of these were, however, pronounced by their tender new nurses to be promising cases—but others had not reached them till all hope was past.

There was one poor little creature which haunted my memory for many days. Its little wizened face was like the "death's head" of what had been an old man, only that its sad pitiful eyes looked at us with a wistful expression. Its small shrivelled

neck and attenuated arms were positively sickening to behold. Yet this poor little creature had been reduced to this terrible condition by the neglect of a paid wet-nurse.

Have you ever looked at an unhappy unfledged young bird that had fallen from its nest and lay helpless on the ground—a poor thing of skin and bone, with its bald head moving uneasily on a long lean neck, its eyes disproportionately large, and its hungry mouth gaping incessantly for the long-expected supplies? Then imagine a whole nursery full of cribs and just such a creature lying in each, only that the creatures are all human beings, and the majority are being brought up by hand, and so have the comfortable companionship of a feeding-bottle.

It was beautiful to see the tender compassion of the kind Sisters for these abandoned nestlings, and the satisfaction with which they joyed over those in whom they discerned symptoms of a vitality which should reward their care.

With true motherly pride and interest they led us through successive rooms in which were the babies which had passed the first most critical stage. Some seemed to have rallied, and looked healthy and bright, but the majority retained pitiful traces of early neglect.

In the more advanced rooms were little creatures just learning to walk, happy in this at least, that for them there was no prospect of having their bones broken, and feet crushed and tortured through long years, till they were transformed from the likeness of shapely human feet to that of calves' hoofs (such is very much the form of the "lily feet" which are the approved standard of beauty for all Chinese women of any social position).

A nice Chinese baby is a very attractive object, and some of these little toddles were particularly so in their quaintly picturesque native dress. We could not wonder that some seemed to have won special love from the motherly Sisters, who looked quite fondly on the trustful little creatures that trotted about after them, clinging lamb-like to the soft folds of their black robes.

Leaving the actual nurseries we came to a play-room, where a considerable number of bigger children were rejoicing in a good healthy romp. I confess I thought their noise must be more trying to the nerves of the Sister in charge than even the wailing of the sick babies, but she seemed well pleased to see her flock so happy, and was thankful to have a share in rearing so many Christian women, each of whom may perhaps prove an influence for good hereafter—a faithful worker among her own people.

Already the French Catholic Sisters have made great way in establishing schools and hospitals. They have also trained a large number of Chinese Lay Sisters to aid in various good works, and nice-looking women these are. The costume they adopt is a slight modification of their own national dress. The peculiar form is retained, but it is made of black material, the sleeves lined with blue. A close black head-dress partly covers the neatly dressed glossy hair, which is fastened with firm silvery pins.

Of the children thus rescued a small number are boys, superfluous sons of families already well provided in this respect, who, though they would shrink from killing a boy, are very well pleased to provide for him so cheaply.[1] Others have been offered for sale in the open market, and have been purchased and brought here by some good Christian. Others are true orphans, whose parents have died in war or famine. Thus from one cause or another the Orphanage includes a considerable number of boys, who, besides their religious education, receive a sound industrial training in all useful branches of trade, under supervision of the Brothers, so that those who may not prove to have a vocation for Church work, may be fitted for secular life. So there are shoemakers and tailors, carpenters, masons, locksmiths, and wood-carvers, and painters. One cannot but regret that one of the industries here taught is the modelling of images of the saints for country chapels, just as the heathen around are taught to manufacture images of their countless gods, all of which must tend to confusion of ideas.

One thing worthy of note at the Jesuit College at Siccaway is the Observatory, which is in charge of a very able meteorologist.

In this town, as in others, there has long been a native Foundling Hospital, much like one I have already described. It was designed by some benevolent Chinamen as a check on infanticide, but it really is principally a place for babies to die in, as they generally arrive in an almost hopeless state, and die within about four days. Those who survive this period are committed to the care of strong healthy wet-nurses, either in the hospital or at their own homes. Near the front gate of this establishment there is a sliding drawer in the wall. In this the new arrivals are deposited by their kindred (who if "more than kin" are surely "less than kind!" and certainly illustrate the proverb that "Better kind fremit nor fremit

[1] Which reminds me of a speech made by a dear old relative of my own, when some one called to condole with her on the death of one of her far too numerous grandchildren. "Oh, my dear! don't condole with *me! There's far more room for it in heaven than in my house!*"

kin"[1]). The rattling of a bamboo drum warns the gatekeeper to pull in the drawer from his post inside the wall, and thus the unloved baby is transferred from its unnatural mother to the care of the matron.

CHAPTER XXII.

CITY OF NINGPO.

The Yung river—Graves—Ice-houses—Ningpo—Wood-carving—The Church mission-house and schools—Chinese clergymen—Ningpo hair-dressing—The seal of the god—Pagoda—Street scenes—Cuttle-fish—Carved-wood furniture—Roman Catholic Orphanage.

Chez BISHOP RUSSELL, NINGPO,
April 27th.

IN answer to a letter of cordial welcome from Bishop Russell of the diocese of Ningpo, I started for this city yesterday afternoon, driving along the broad handsome quays of Shanghai as far as the China Merchant Company's wharf, where lay the Kiang Teen, just about to sail. She is a splendid American steamer, with capital accommodation for first-class passengers, and abundant space for an unlimited number of Chinamen, to whom close packing is no objection, provided the fares are sufficiently low.

I found myself in possession of a cabin like a comfortable room, but with the first glimmer of dawn I was astir, and gladly accepted an invitation from the genial captain to share his early chocolate and take possession of a snug corner on the bridge, commanding a perfect view of the Yung river, which we entered at daybreak, passing Chin-hae, a city about three miles in circumference, with castellated walls. Its most conspicuous feature is a picturesque old castle crowning a small but precipitous hill overlooking the sea, so we saw it with a foreground of quaint junks. This citadel was captured in 1841 by the British, who therein seized about 150 pieces of artillery.[2]

From this point we steamed slowly up the stream for about twelve miles, the morning mists rising dreamily from the river,

[1] "Better kind strangers than estranged kindred."

[2] On the 2d of March 1885 this fort was bombarded by the French under Admiral Courbet, and the approach to Ningpo by the river was blockaded.

and from the low damp rice-lands and canals, and giving strange relief to multitudinous hillocks—green mounds of varying height and form, which here mark ancestral graves, groups of which, in tens, twenties, hundreds, lie thickly strewn in every direction.

They must certainly number tens of thousands, and usurp a most unfair proportion of the flat alluvial land, which yields such rich green crops wherever the farmer ventures to cultivate. Throughout this district nearly all graves are marked by simple mounds, the picturesque horse-shoe form so common in Southern China being here unknown, though there are some ugly square brick buildings.

As we approached this fine old walled city, the principal objects which revealed themselves were buildings much larger than ordinary dwelling-houses, and having very high-pitched, thatched roofs. Of these we counted 380, and I learnt that they are ice-houses, in which, during the winter months, the ice is stored for the fishers, whose work forms one of the most important industries here. The necessity of a large supply is evident, on account of the great heat in summer; and as even the winters are often so mild as to yield no ice, a special law requires the owners of these ice-houses always to keep up a three-years' supply, in order to meet such emergencies.

The construction of the houses is simple, and is found to answer excellently. Each is simply a large reservoir consisting of four solid stone walls thickly coated with clay, and with gutters in the stone pavement to allow of drainage from the ice. These walls are about twenty feet in height. On them rests the bamboo framework of a high-pitched roof, which is thatched with straw. The coating of clay makes the building alike water-proof and heat-proof.

The entrance to the house is by a flight of steps leading up to a door cut in the roof, and shielded by a heavy straw mat. The ice is removed by another door on the level of the ground. Each house stands by itself on a flat rice-field of clay loam, which can readily be flooded. So soon as there is any chance of a light frost, the water is turned on, and in the morning the thin layers are carefully collected, pounded into a solid mass, and stored between layers of matting. Thus it can be preserved for years.

From these ice-houses it is carried out to the fishing-fleets at sea in specially constructed ice-boats with wooden roofs. They carry the ice packed with alternate layers of straw matting, which, on reaching the fleet, are removed, and layers of fish are substituted, which thus reach the city in perfect condition.

Another industry here, in connection with the fisheries, is the evaporation of salt in salt-pans for the use of the fish-curers.

As we neared the city, great timber-yards, docks, and temples successively appeared, and about 7 A.M. the large steamer was moored alongside the wharf, and Captain Steele took me ashore to inspect the shops of the famous Ningpo wood-carvers, which are all in that quarter of the town. The finest of this work, consisting of intricate figure scenes, is most wonderfully delicate, and commands a price which even in Europe or America would be considered high; but the second-class carvings, many of which are excellent free rendering of bamboo or other light foliage, are exceedingly cheap. Picture or mirror frames and brackets seem to be the favourite objects of manufacture. We were specially called upon to admire a large cabinet, on which incalculable patient skill must have been lavished. To my eyes, however, accustomed to the rich tone of Canton blackwood furniture, this pale wood is rather an unpleasant material. Here, of course, it is greatly in favour, being the special industry of this city.

Ere this tour of inspection was finished, Miss Laurence came to meet me and escort me to this—the English Church Mission. Captain Steele lent us his own open chairs of wicker-work, as being infinitely preferable to the closely covered upright ones which are commonly used; so, having secured bearers, we were carried about two miles through the city, crossing the river by a ferry, and at last arriving here, where the bishop and Mrs Russell received me with most hospitable kindness.

Here in the heart of the heathen city, on a site which, but a few years ago, was devoted to accumulations of foulest rubbish, now stands the pleasant home with its bright little garden, fragrant with roses and orange-blossoms, and enlivened by a charming group of tiny Chinese children with partially shaven heads and in their pretty native dresses of every vivid hue. These are children of some of the native clergy and teachers, whose very small salary makes it a real boon when one of their little ones here finds a temporary home and wise and loving care. Mrs Russell's special pet is a delicious wee baby-girl who can just toddle, and asserts her privilege of climbing on to the bishop's knee, where she sits supremely happy. Miss Laurence has a pet wee boy to match, who is the plaything of her girls' school. The heads of these little creatures are delightfully quaint, being plaited on each side in two ridiculous small tails like horns. These will gradually

lengthen into two great plaits, and finally combine into one large long plait, eked out with silk.

On either side of the bishop's house are his schools. Miss Laurence with her Chinese assistants has charge of the girls, and also of a boarding-school for young boys; while the Rev. J. C. Hoare has the care of the schools for older boys and the training-college for young men, most of whom are preparing for work as catechists or as school teachers.

Facing the house is a neat church, where on several days of the week one of the native clergy sits for hours instructing such of his heathen countrymen as care to come quietly to hear his message, while the regular services are attended by a large and most reverent congregation. When we looked in this afternoon, we found the father of the little pet baby—a very fine stalwart man—addressing a large group of men who had assembled as inquirers concerning the foreign doctrine—which, however, they are instructed not to call "foreign" any more than they call the sun foreign, which shines alike on England and on China.

There are at present four Chinese clergymen in priests' orders attached to the English Church Mission here; their names sound strange to my ears—the Rev. Sing Eng-teh, the Rev. 'O-kwông-yiao, the Rev. Dzing Ts-sing, and the Rev. Wong Yiu-kwông. There are also four ordained Chinese clergy in the Fuh-Kien province, and two at Hong-Kong. Some others have already passed to their rest. These have all been most carefully selected, as being not only intellectual, and also men of eminently spiritual lives, but further, as men truly fitted for evangelistic work among their countrymen. They have given invaluable aid in the translation of the Scriptures and other works into the colloquial dialects of their respective provinces, thus enabling the most unlearned (to whom the classic mandarin, which is the *lingua franca* of the educated, would be unintelligible) to read the sacred books in their own tongue.

We spent a pleasant morning in this sweet home, and Miss Laurence took me to her house next door to see all her nice Chinese girls. They are a bright, happy-looking flock, numbering about two dozen of all ages; and all live here entirely, so as to be wholly separate from heathen influence, for it is hoped that in after-years much good will radiate from this little centre. We found them busily at work, some reading, some writing—others with large picturesque wheels winding the silk spun by their own silk-worms, which are fed on the mulberry-leaves grown in the

garden. This province is one of the chief silk-producing districts of China, and there are mulberry-groves in every direction for their support. All these girls look intelligent, and strikingly clean and tidy, their neatly dressed glossy black hair reflecting the sunlight.

The style of hair-dressing fashionable in Ningpo is not encouraged among the schoolgirls, and it is certainly very peculiar, and, so far as I can learn, curiously unlike that of any other district in China. A woman having rolled up her own hair quite simply, purchases two enormous wings of black hair made up on wire, and these she attaches to the back of her head, whence they project fully fifteen inches! She also purchases a small neat fold of hair with which she conceals the fastening. There is no attempt at deception in the wearing of this false hair; it is simply a headdress, which could not possibly be made of growing hair.

After luncheon the bishop most kindly undertook to show us some of the city lions, so we once more betook us to our chairs, he escorting us on his pony. Our first visit was to the Temple of the City Defenders, a large national temple, where the municipal authorities offer solemn worship at stated festivals. Here, as in most of the military temples I have seen, the objects of adoration are several huge idols of the Tartar type, with very long black moustaches. The temple is adorned with numerous festoons of yellow cloth, covered with inscriptions in black characters. These are votive offerings of a very decorative type. On the altar lies the box tied up in silken cloths which has so often excited my curiosity in the temples. I now learn that it contains *the seal of the god*, which is duly stamped on paper charms or clothes, for the healing of the sick or the exorcising of devils.

We went next to the great pagoda, built 1100 years ago in honour of the goddess Ma-Tsu-pa. Till the middle of the present century it retained its seven tiers of ornamental roofs and verandahs decorated with dragons and fishes, but these have been swept away by fire, and there now remains only a very tall but poor and naked-looking white tower. It is actually fourteen storeys high, though there are only seven tiers of windows. Miss Laurence and I climbed to the top, and had an extensive view of the city, which is flat and wanting in distinct features—a flat country all around, with hills in the far distance.

Descending thence, we continued our journey through the city, passing innumerable objects of artistic interest, combined with an indescribable amount of dirt. There is the usual succession of

wonderfully narrow streets thronged with a crowd which, albeit chiefly composed of men, is nevertheless picturesque, and not lacking in some variety of colour; for though all the poor are dressed in blue, generally calico, the silken garments of the prosperous folk are often very gay. Of course every one, rich or poor, carries a fan, and works it ceaselessly in a quiet mechanical fashion.

From every house hang pretty Chinese lanterns, and all manner of realistic signs hang from the open shops, or else tall, very narrow sign-boards, from fifteen to eighteen feet high, all carved and gilded, and gorgeously coloured, rest on carved stands beside the entrance; and as few shops have a frontage of more than ten feet, these form a very conspicuous feature in the scene.

Among the street-hawkers I noticed some selling very pretty artificial flowers made of fluffy silk, others selling paper umbrellas; some had ornaments of imitation jade, which might deceive even a fairly practised eye. Among the remarkable figures are the shoe merchants, whose stock of shoes of all sizes is slung from the ends of a bamboo, covering two pyramidal light wooden frames, which form stands wherever the pedlar sees fit to halt. Others in the same way carry great stands of pipes, and others flowers, cakes, sugar-plums, or fish. Here are barbers hard at work—there fortune-tellers.

The itinerant fishmongers sell cuttle-fish large and small, and other creatures repulsive in our eyes, but all are generally cut up into small portions suited to purses whose investments rarely exceed half a farthing. I noticed that there was an extensive demand for large flat eels, so silvery-white as to resemble polished swords. This is just the height of cuttle-fish season here—it begins in March and continues till the end of August, and is as important to the fishers of Ningpo as are herring to our own men. Special boats are set apart for this fishery, which continues day and night, a fire being lighted on deck at night that its glare may attract the cuttle-fish. Besides the very large consumption in the daily market, an enormous quantity are dried for export. They are also largely used for bait when cockroaches are not to be caught. These, however, answer the purpose just as well.

As a general rule, it is only in wet weather that fresh cuttle-fish come into the market, for so long as the weather is fine the boats do not care to return to the city, but prefer to remain on the scene of action and prepare the cuttle-fish for winter store. They are merely split open and cleaned, and are then spread on mats which are laid all over certain rocky isles; there they are left to dry in

the sun, after which they are packed in wooden tubs and compressed by the trampling of human feet.

We passed street-bakers baking appetising biscuits in neat little portable ovens, and, for less than a farthing, serving out large bowls of savoury soup or stew to appreciative customers, who, holding the bowl in one hand, and with the other working the two chop-sticks, quickly disposed thereof. I think I have already mentioned that at these cheap fruit-stalls, oranges ready peeled are offered for a smaller sum than those in their skins—the skin being a distinct article of commerce, used, I believe, in medicine, though marmalade does not appear to be a recognised luxury.

As we hurried along we noted quaint bits of carving, odd stone beasts, fanciful bridges, men busy tailoring and coopering, ivory-carving, watchmaking, and fan-making, shops full of brazen vessels for temples, or handsome coffins for dutiful sons to present to their parents. Smooth-shaven men in garments of amazing cleanliness, and with huge bare foreheads, and glossy black plaits down to their heels, welcomed us to curio-shops, where strange treasures tempt one in a way that the identical object seen in England could never do. The simplest shopping expedition (to me so wearisome in other lands) here becomes a delight, the shop itself with its gorgeously decked domestic shrine, and sometimes glimpses of every-day life in the inner court, all combining to produce scenes attractive to the artistic eye. Only the too rapid succession of such subjects is bewildering.

And then there is such never-failing interest in a show-room which is also the workshop wherein each skilful workman deftly manufactures his wares, apparently undisturbed by our curious gaze. Now we pause to watch an old man in enormous spectacles producing exquisitely fine ivory carving; then we come to another group whose swift needles are tracing gorgeous dragons and mythical birds on a groundwork of rich silk; others making preposterous masks for the use of the theatres, or imitation ingots of silver wherewith to propitiate the dead.

We halted for some time in a street wholly devoted to the sale of carved-wood furniture, of the same pale colour as that we had seen in the morning. We entered a very large shop, like a warehouse, where the good bishop, as is his wont, soon engaged a group of shopmen in a very earnest conversation. They all seemed really glad to see him, and to have a chance of a word with him. He has such a genial manner that it attracts every one, and I am told he has a singular aptness for bringing in some quotation from Con-

fucius, or some unanswerable Chinese proverb, to back his own argument, and turn the tables against whoever seeks to gainsay his words; and such quotations from their own sages delight his audience, and many are thus first attracted to come to the chapels for further conversation with him or his catechists.

While he was thus engaged I had full leisure to explore the innermost recesses of the shop, and examine the beautiful carvings, especially some curious large bedsteads, which answer all the purposes of a dressing-room, having drawers beneath the bed, and on either hand all necessary arrangements for washing, elaborate hair-dressing, and the application of *cosmétiques*, so arranged as to be shut in by an outer enclosure of beautifully carved screen-work. These, when in use, are further adorned with rich hangings of coloured silk and embroidery.

We next visited the great Fuh-Kien temple, which is the Guild of merchants from that province residing here. It bears a striking resemblance to the Guild of the Ningpo merchants living at Foo-Chow. This has the advantage of a large number of beautifully carved dragon stone pillars; but, on the other hand, it is at present much less clean and brilliant. We found it densely thronged with a blue crowd in all the absorbing delight of a grand Sing-Song, wherein I so fully sympathise that of course I looked curiously to see what was going on. By a very singular coincidence I recognised the identical troupe of actors whom I had last seen at Foo-Chow, acting the identical play—a gorgeous mythological subject.

Thence we passed on to the Roman Catholic Mission, where we were very kindly received by a pleasant French priest, who showed us the large fine church (where a special altar was being decked in honour of the Blessed Virgin, in preparation for the special festivals of the coming month of May, especially dedicated to her worship).

From the church we passed to the Sisters' house, to which we were admitted by a *portière*, who has held her post for thirty years. Here twelve French and several Chinese Sisters, all robed in black serge, and wearing large white caps of dazzling cleanness, devote their lives to the care of foundlings, or of any other children whose parents agree to give them up entirely (which many are delighted to do). In order to avoid all contact between the children and heathen teachers, the Sisters themselves acquire the difficult arts of reading and writing Chinese character, and themselves instruct their little ones, most of whom they have rescued from an untimely grave.

A pleasant Sister, who has been there for ten years, took us round the large establishment, with its nice fresh dormitories, airy school-rooms, and large playground, all within high walls, which is quite according to Chinese ideas of proper seclusion (certainly this large young family does credit to the care bestowed upon its members by both the French and Chinese Sisters). Their loving care is extended to the sick poor, for whose benefit they have a free dispensary.

In a quiet corner of the garden is the little cemetery, where rest those Sisters who have died here at their post—for the work they undertake is lifelong, and no yearnings for a return to their beloved France may ever be indulged by those whose lives have been devoted to this work.

From this home of the little ones we returned, to find that some friends had just arrived from an expedition to the hills, and could find no words to express their rapturous delight at the gorgeous display of scarlet and gold azaleas, which blossom in wonderful masses, covering the mountain-sides with such dense thickets as to produce strong local colouring, making the term *rainbow-tinted* the simple expression of a fact.

I had understood that this was the exact season at which to visit these azalea-clothed hills, but so short is the duration of their glory, that it now seems scarcely possible for me to get there till their first magnificence is past. However, various plans are on foot, and something pleasant is certain to be developed ere long.

CHAPTER XXIII.

IN A BUDDHIST MONASTERY.

A "haul-over"—Commemorative arches—Canals—May-day on the azalea hills—A venerable monastery—A Buddhist dinner—Costly services for the dead—The eastern lake—Cash, their value—An infant congregation—A staring crowd—Good ground of hope for missions.

April 28th.

To my great delight the bishop has decided that Miss Laurence positively requires a few days' rest, and a breath of bracing mountain air, and he has most kindly arranged that I shall accompany

her on an expedition to Tien-Dong, the Buddhist "Monastery of the Heavenly Boy," which lies about twenty miles from Ningpo, in one of the richest azalea districts. This will be quite an ideal trip, as Miss Laurence's wonderful knowledge of the Chinese language, both colloquial and classic, is a source of never-ending amazement to the people, so that we are quite sure to get on all right.

AT THE MONASTERY OF TIEN-DONG—
i.e., "THE HEAVENLY BOY,"
May-day.

Of all the strange and lovely places where I have spent successive May-days, this has perhaps been the most remarkable. One was spent in the Himalayas, where the familiar notes of cuckoos without number mingled with the chattering of troops of monkeys, who pelted us with blossoms of scarlet rhododendron trees! Another on a lonely but most lovely Fijian isle, among palms and tree-ferns. Last year I was in the glorious Yosemite Valley, revelling in the beauty of its wonderful waterfalls, and the fragrance of its delicious azaleas. But I think this has been strangest of all, for here are we, two foreign ladies, without a countryman within twenty miles of us, staying quite alone in an old Buddhist monastery, with upwards of a hundred Chinese priests and monks, all of whom are as kind to us as kind can be. They could not have welcomed us more hospitably had we come to crave the performance of costly services on behalf of our deceased ancestors, which is the object for which three wealthy Chinese families are now boarding at the monastery. I must confess that these holy brethren are rather a mixed-looking lot; some are really intellectual-looking men, others are just bright and pleasant, but some are of a very low type, and quite look as if they really were refugees from justice.

Yesterday afternoon the bishop accompanied us to the river, and started us in the Mission house-boat—quite a different thing from the luxurious house-boats of the mercantile community, being simply a common boat of the country, so arranged as to allow of sleeping and cooking on board. Like all the other boats, it is provided with an arched roof made in sections, on a telescopic principle, so that by day they all slide back one beneath the other, and at night can be drawn forward so as to furnish a strong rain-proof cover.

For a short distance our route lay up the great river; then it was necessary to enter one of the canals which here intersect the country in every direction, flowing at a level considerably higher

than that of the river, and as canal locks were not invented in the days of Confucius, they do not exist in the China of to-day, their equivalent being a process known as a "haul-over," whereby boats are raised or lowered, as the case may be, by an enormous expenditure of labour—human or bovine. From the river-level to that of the canal the bank is sloped and built up with solid masonry, which is overlaid with slippery clay. On the massive stone embankment on either side are placed capstans, which, being turned simultaneously, draw up strong hawsers made of split and twisted bamboo, which are passed round the stem or the prow of the boat, which is thus raised to the summit of the dividing incline, and after an immense amount of exertion and noisy talk, the boat at last glides into its new channel. As hundreds of boats sometimes pass to and fro in a day, the amount of physical labour involved must be immense. The sheer dragging-power of two teams of buffaloes is, however, occasionally enlisted, in lieu of the united force of many men with the windlasses.

Thus we were raised to our higher level, and glided on for some hours through richly cultivated level country, which is irrigated by so many minor canals as to form a network of waters, all crossed by high-pitched stone bridges, constructed so as to allow free passage of boats.

Here and there we passed great *pai-lows* or triumphal arches of brick, granite, or marble, as the case may be, the groundwork of solid masonry being enriched with most elaborate carving, erected in honour of some deed which has commended itself to the Chinese notion of merit. It may be to a benevolent citizen, or to one who has conferred great credit on the place of his birth, by obtaining a very high degree at the examination in Confucian classics. Or it may commemorate the intense filial piety of a daughter who has given a piece of her own flesh to make medicine to save a parent's life, or the constancy of a widow or widower who, having been early deprived of his or her mate, has through long years of secular life continued faithful to the memory of the departed. Or perhaps the inscription on the great stone arch tells how a maiden whose betrothed died ere they were wedded, came (as in duty bound) to fill her position of daughter-in-law in his parents' house, and there dutifully continued in virgin widowhood till she attained her sixty-first year, when her friends and connections obtained the imperial sanction (which includes an imperial contribution) to commemorate her life of solitary virtue by the erection of a *pai-low*.

Strange to say, many of these solid marks of popular and



A PAILOW OR COMMEMORATIVE ARCH.

imperial approbation commemorate suicides for causes which are deemed honourable—as, for instance, when a woman prefers death to dishonour, or when a betrothed maiden (very naturally dreading her lifelong drudgery in the house of her mother-in-law) resolves to follow her bridegroom-elect into the spirit-world. Honourable suicides amongst men are also in some cases thus commemorated. (Apparently Chinese notions regarding suicide are as lax as on the subject of infanticide, and a considerable number of women put an end to their lives in the calmest manner, either by taking opium or drowning, some through jealous misery in the zenana, others to avoid a marriage which has been arranged for them.)

In some cases these great arches commemorate nothing more remarkable than the fact that some worthy old gentleman has attained his eighty-first year. Others, of more interest, record that some venerable grandfather or grandmother has completed a century, or passed a literary examination.

The people in this province seem to delight in doing honour to such notabilities, and so these curious triple erections are scattered all over the country in the most promiscuous way and the most unexpected situations, without any obvious connection with anything. Though I have used the term "archway" for lack of a better, these essentially Chinese commemorative structures are not arches—on the contrary, they consist of three square-topped portals, above which is piled a heterogeneous mass, perhaps forty feet in height, of most intricate construction, consisting of exquisitely carved stone figures, animals, Chinese characters, and fretwork—all these are sculptured right through the stone, so as to be quite open-work, showing the blue sky beyond. Many are really beautiful objects, which have been erected at great expense, and in every case by special permission of the Emperor.

In delicious and wonderful silence we glided up the canal, the boat being sometimes pulled and sometimes towed by our excellent pig-tailed crew. All the land on either side is under cultivation (save, indeed, where hillocks, apparently scattered quite at random, mark the site of graves, and these are legion). The rice-fields are now of a lovely green, as are also the fields of wheat and barley. Tall sugar-cane and maize and various other crops vary the scene, and now and again a heavenly fragrance tells us that we are passing a field of blossoming beans. It is only fair that we should sometimes be thus rejoiced, for our poor noses are often severely afflicted in China, where the dreadful sewerage of the cities is so openly transferred to the agricultural districts!

Ending our voyage by clear moonlight, we anchored at Sioh Bah, at the foot of the hills, and there slept on board, awakening this morning at earliest dawn to greet as lovely a May-day as heart could desire—a morning made musical by the warbling of innumerable birds. True to traditions of home, we washed our faces in the May dew which lay so abundantly on fields of the richest pink clover, and banks of golden buttercups and celandine. It was a bright clear morning, and the air crisp and exhilarating.

After an early breakfast we secured coolies to carry the bamboo arm-chairs which we had brought with us, and started on the five-mile ascent to this monastery, by a most lovely path winding up and down among hills all clothed in the freshest green, and through a paradise of most heavenly flowers. In many places the path is overshadowed by tall tallow-trees—not an attractive name, I confess, but a very ornamental tree, loaded with blossom. Its seeds, when crushed and boiled, yield the vegetable tallow of which are made most of the candles which are burnt before idol shrines in the temples. To obtain the requisite hardness, it is mixed with a small quantity of pure white wax, which is deposited by legions of minute insects on the branches of a stunted tree of the sumach family,[1] which is said to be peculiar to certain districts in the great western province of Szu-chuan.

Other trees are festooned by richest clusters of large white dog-roses and lilac wistaria. Here and there we come to thickets of most gorgeous golden azaleas, scenting the whole air with their delicious perfume. I never saw such glorious azaleas as these, except under most careful cultivation; these are quite different from the Californian azalea, which so enchanted me last spring. The fragrance of these is perhaps scarcely so ethereal, but the

[1] *Rhus succedaneum*? The insect is said to be *Coccus sinensis*.
These wax insects, and the fruit of their labours, are for several reasons specially interesting to naturalists. In the first place, they come into existence in galls on a totally different plant from that on which they are to deposit their wax, the first an evergreen shrub which grows in the western districts on a different soil, and in a different climate from the wax-tree, to which, about the beginning of June, the wax-layers are conveyed by their nurses! Unlike our busy bees, these tiny creatures do not appear to collect the materials for the manufacture of their wax, but seem to evolve it in extraordinary quantities, and by the end of August all the branches on which they have settled are thickly coated with pure white wax to the depth of perhaps a quarter of an inch. This is scraped off, melted in boiling water, strained through cloth, and is thus prepared for commerce, a certain amount being even exported to Britain. As to the poor little insects which have so generously yielded their store, they receive small mercy at the hands of the ruthless wax-collectors, who finally sweep them all into boilers, and having expressed the last particle of their wax, throw them out to feed the pigs.
I am told that the French have introduced this wax insect from China into Algiers.

blossom is very much larger, producing a glorious mass of colour. On many heads I have counted from forty to fifty large blossoms, forming clusters ranging from eight to fifteen inches in circumference.

Only last week these hills were still blood-red from the abundance of vividly crimson azaleas. Of these the prime glory has already faded, to be replaced by these golden beauties, which on the lower hills now reign supreme; but here and there, on higher levels, we found delicate lilac and rose coloured varieties, also a lovely and very fragrant shrub with masses of wax-like lilac blossom and small smooth leaves, not hairy like those of the azalea; I think it must be some relation to a kalmia. I am told that in some of these mountain districts the azalea shrubs grow to a height of from fifteen to twenty feet, covered with one gorgeous mass of blossom, and also that magnificent peonies grow wild. We have, however, seen none of the latter.

Here and there we passed graves—no longer the ornamental horse-shoe graves of the Fuh-Kien province, but ugly little brick houses, some of which are encased in straw. Sometimes our path led us through clumps of graceful bamboo, sometimes through avenues of fine old fir-trees, beneath which, here and there, are pleasant rest-houses—pleasant also to the eye, the walls being coloured of a harmonious red, while the roof is pearly grey. The road from the water-level to the monastery is a fine paved causeway, and near the monastery every twenty-ninth stone is embellished with a carved lotus-blossom. Everything about this place is venerable and harmonious, especially the colouring of the building, the walls of which, like those of the rest-houses, are of a rich but faded red, with weather-beaten grey roofs, a background of richly wooded hills, and a quiet pool in the foreground. It is a very large and handsome old monastery, as fine an example as we could wish to see.

And here we two ladies arrived (escorted only by a table-servant), and were most hospitably welcomed by the brethren, and an excellent room was assigned to us in the guests' quarters, where we are now sitting comfortably established, with our own bedding spread on two neat bedsteads. Would that I could send you the exquisite nosegay of gorgeous blossoms and brightly coloured young leaves which I gathered this afternoon, and which scents the whole room!

Passing through a large outer temple containing an immense image of the fat laughing God of Wealth, we entered an inner

court, where a flight of steps led us to the great temple, which is very fine indeed. It is a large solemn hall, with heavy roof supported on great red pillars. As you enter you face three immense gilded images of Buddha—all three exactly alike, and all looking down on the worshippers with an expression of supreme benevolence. I think that the singularly calm beauty of these three most worshipful images accounts for the very unusually impressive feeling of this temple. These images are each about forty feet in height, and their lotus thrones are raised on a platform which gives them an elevation of ten feet more, and each is overshadowed by a great gilt canopy retaining the form (though detail and symbolism are apparently forgotten) of the seven-headed cobra of India and Ceylon. Here the canopy is made to suggest clouds. As usual, there are a multitude of other images in the temple—shrines to the Queen of Heaven and to the Gods of Heaven and Earth, and large gilt images of Buddha's favoured disciples.

When we arrived at about 9 A.M. a full service was going on—not the true morning service, for that was over hours before, but litanies were being solemnly chanted and the Buddhist ritual read. When engaged in the services of the temple, all the priests, whether robed in grey or yellow, wear crimson mantles, made of small bits sewed together, to look as if they were a patchwork of rags. This is done even in the robe of an abbot, which may be of the very richest material, but must thus seem to agree with his vow of poverty. The mantle is fastened on the right breast by a large hook of imitation jade catching a large ring of the same material.

Immediately after service, followed breakfast in the refectory. The venerable abbot, though too old to attend the public services, presides at meals, sitting at a small table apart. Just behind his chair, hanging on a nail, is a wooden object like a salad fork and spoon united, representing two hands. A servitor brings this to the abbot after the first grace, and the old man places thereon a few grains of rice from his own bowl. These the young monk deposits on a pillar outside, as an offering to the small gods. After the second grace all commence eating in perfect silence.

Having arrived some time before the coolies who were burdened with our food and bedding, we decided on asking for dinner, knowing that where there were so many Chinese guests, our doing so could not be inconvenient. A bright, pleasant-looking young priest at once led us to a comfortable guest-room, where an excellent dinner was speedily brought to us in courses, served by a remarkably pretty small boy. First came a tray of cakes, sweet-

meats, and pea-nuts, then a great lacquer-bowl of steaming rice to accompany successive bowls of three different soups and nine other dishes, including young bamboo shoots, stewed, which were particularly good, rather like asparagus. Of course the whole was entirely vegetable, though some preparations of corn-husk and other things tasted so very much like meat and preserved fish that we found it difficult to persuade ourselves that such was not the case.

For beverages we had rice-wine and tea, and when, having thoroughly enjoyed our meal, we called for the reckoning, we were told that the charge for the whole table, supposing a party of six persons had dined, would naturally have been 200 cash—*i.e.*, 20 cents, or about 10d.! We paid 8d., which was evidently considered quite satisfactory, and the pretty boy who waited on us grinned with delight when I gave him five cents. Can I give you a better proof that we have reached a spot where foreigners are almost unknown?

A charge of such extraordinary moderation struck us as being singularly in contrast with the ecclesiastical fees required for the performance of priestly offices. The three families who are boarding here tell us that they each pay sixty dollars (£12) a-day for such, besides the regular charge for their board and lodging; and as one of these families has already been here for upwards of a week, the priests appear to be driving a very good business. But I am bound to say they work pretty hard for their money, as services go on day and night without intermission at one or other of the many shrines.

These much-fleeced relations have just one corner of satisfaction in knowing that the Celestial Powers see that they get fair-play in the matter of their dearly purchased prayers. In the Buddhist hells a specially gloomy tower is tenanted by dishonest monks and nuns, who having received money beforehand for a given number of masses for the dead, have failed to perform them. Therefore they are condemned through long ages to read aloud from service-books printed in the very smallest type, and by the dim light of one lantern hanging from the roof!

After a general inspection of the place, and of the preaching-hall, and numerous minor shrines, we went out to explore the surroundings and to revel in scent and colour on the azalea-covered hills. We found our way to the cave-home of a genuine old hermit, whom we had seen at the temple, wearing a curiously shaped silver band round his head; he had allowed all his hair to grow quite long—of course in fulfilment of a vow. He is the

very first Chinaman I have seen who has not shaved the front half of his head! I am told that a considerable number of ascetics live thus in solitude, in caves or huts in the neighbourhood of various monasteries, from which their food is daily brought to them, so that they have the privilege of existing year after year without a care. The monastic life in all forms seems to be greatly in favour in this part of the empire. There are innumerable monasteries all over the province of Cheh-kiang, and here within a radius of fifty miles from Ningpo the monks are estimated at several thousands.

On our way back we visited a row of very ornamental and very curiously shaped receptacles for the ashes of cremated priests, to which, I think, is added the ash of the incense daily burnt in the temple.

As I was anxious to secure a sketch of the interior of the temple, and especially of the three great Buddhas as seen *en profile*, we returned thither, but again service was going on, and about a hundred brethren were present. I naturally feared that the priests might object to my sketching during service, but I found that, on the contrary, they were greatly interested, and anxious to make me comfortable. One fine old man, however, asked regretfully what was the good, and what merit could there be in my doing all this, if I did not really reverence the Poossas?[1] He admitted, however, that very few even of his own fraternity do so! But this idea of accumulating merit is the keynote to every act in the life of a Buddhist.

The idea of keeping a debtor-and-creditor account with heaven is one which finds great favour with the business-like Chinese mind. In their books for daily guidance in self-examination, tables of merit and demerit are given, in which various good and evil actions are assessed at their spiritual value. By the daily balancing of such an account, a careful man may calculate how he stands with heaven, and year by year he can wind up his own affairs, and carry over a balance of good or evil deeds towards the next year's reckoning.

But the man who is greedy of good works thinks he can best eschew temptation to sin by living a hermit life apart in some anchorite cell, so that a very large number of the "religious" of

[1] The old priest seemed to mean the images, but the Poossa appears to be the title of a class of exalted disciples of Buddha, who, though they have not yet attained to the rank of Buddha, are nevertheless able to help mankind, and are much more inclined to benevolence and sympathy than the coldly perfect Fuh or Buddha.

China retire even from the monasteries and spend their days and nights in almost ceaseless reiteration of the formula of praise—*O mi to Fō! O mi to Fō!* or else *Namu Amida Butzu! Namu Amida Butzu!* (The latter is the Mongolian title of Buddha, and the former the Chinese corruption of the same.)

One thing which struck me as very strange was that many of the visitors gathered round Miss Laurence, asking her to tell them about "the doctrine"—meaning Christianity. I ventured to suggest that the priests would surely object to all this talk in the temple during a service, but the bystanders scouted the idea, in a tone expressive of anything but reverence for their spiritual pastors, and then the principal women asked Miss Laurence to go to their room to talk to them at leisure. Yet these are the very people who are paying for all these services on behalf of their ancestors, and who have been doing so for years past at an annual cost of 340 dollars!

ON THE HOUSE-BOAT, GLIDING DOWN THE CANAL,
May 3*d*.

I must take up my parable where I left off on May-day. That was a night much to be remembered—the venerable monastery on the azalea-covered hills, and the quiet up-stairs room where we sat so peacefully in the clear moonlight, overlooking the grey roofs of the monastic buildings and the beautiful valley, while ever and anon the stillness was broken by some temple sound of chant or bell. At 8 P.M. the loveliness of the night tempted us forth again, and attracted by the deep tones of the great temple gong, we threaded our way through long passages, and past the monks' dormitories, till we reached the great temple, where an ancestral sacrifice was being offered, all manner of food and paper clothes, imitation ingots of silver, and other useful articles being placed before tall, carved wood tablets, whereon were inscribed the names of the dead.

The great central Buddha was partly veiled by a yellow curtain embroidered with blue dragons. Before him, on a raised platform, sat six priests and a superior (not the very old abbot), who wore a sort of mitre like a crown with eight or nine points, having an image painted on each. As a scenic effect, I have never seen anything more striking than this, as seen by the subdued light of quaintly shaped hanging-lamps, mostly of oiled paper, but some of coloured glass with silken fringe,—a light which scarcely touched the solemn gloom of the surrounding temple, or the intense shadows of the dark heavy roof, but was wholly concentrated on the central

group, and especially on the great golden images which, solemn and calm, looked down on their worshippers through the filmy clouds of fragrant incense which floated upward to lose themselves in the darkness.

While the priests were chanting a prolonged litany, we passed into another chapel, where an exactly similar service was being performed in presence of tablets bearing the same names. Here we found all the relations—pleasant and very superior men and women. They told us a good deal about themselves, and at once requested Miss Laurence to tell them more about Christian doctrine.

After a while we went to bed, but not to much sleep—for all night long, sounds of temple bells and gongs kept awakening us; and about 2 A.M., roused by the solemn booming of the great gong in the temple (which seemed to startle the stillness of the hills, and awaken ghostly echoes), we once more stole forth, feeling our way along the dark corridors, when happily our special friend, the pleasant young priest, overtook us as he was hurrying along, obedient to the summons, and gave us the benefit of his lantern.

This time we found another family about to perform ancestral worship. I suspect these were not well pleased at our arrival, but we ignored their broad hint that the great service would not be till dawn, and waited to see what would happen. Presently twenty-four priests came in wearing the crimson mantle, and intoned a long service. Two men and two women of the family went through many prostrations, and each separately lighted joss-sticks and lamps all over the place, and laid twenty-four little parcels of money on the altar. Presently another priest came in, followed by a young acolyte bearing a tray on which were twenty-four little parcels each containing 36 cash, equal in value to about 2d. One of these was presented to each officiating priest. Afterwards, however, the larger parcels were distributed.

Being very sleepy, and finding the continuous droning in semi-obscurity exceedingly soporific, we slipped out, and as we passed one of the lesser chapels we saw a fine array of pasteboard horses, houses, servants, boxes of paper clothes, and quantities of silvered paper ingots, ready to be burnt for the use of the dead. I should have liked to see this noble bonfire, and the ceremonial connected therewith, but we failed to ascertain when it was to take place, and being fairly tired out, we returned to bed and rested till 6 A.M., when, wishing to see what was going on, I once more retraced the now familiar way to the great temple, and found separate services going on at each of the principal shrines, before the

colossal Buddhas and in presence of the Goddess of Mercy. After one day more, replete with memories of deep interest, we bade adieu to this kindly fraternity, and again enjoyed a lovely walk over the green hills and among the azalea thickets, where the joyous birds were singing in full chorus, and so we returned to the boat laden with golden blossoms.

It was bright moonlight ere we reached the river, and we decided to start at once for the eastern lake, Tongwoo, thinking that we should not only save time, but enjoy the freshness of the night. We were both, however, so utterly weary, that we crept into our berths, and slept peacefully till midnight, when we reached the entrance to the lake, into which boats must be raised by windlass up a very steep "haul-over."

We found the village silent as death, and great was the wrath of the locksmen at being disturbed, and no wonder! They turned out growling hideously, but a present of 70 cash beyond the 80 cash due to them (the whole sum being equal to about a shilling) restored them to beaming good-humour!

The said cash are the only coins in general use here, for few transactions of daily life are on so large a scale as to necessitate the use of silver. In the shops almost any silver coin of any nation will pass, its value being determined by its weight. Dollars are broken up into small pieces and weighed, fragments being added or removed till the accurate weight is attained—a most troublesome mode of payment. Cash involve trouble of another sort. You wish to pay a man sixpence—its equivalent is 130 or 140 cash, and these must be counted, and he must make sure that they are of the right sort, and that no debased iron cash have slipped in. Of the correct cash a good many varieties are in circulation—in copper, bronze, and brass. They are about the size of a very thin farthing, with inscription in Chinese character, and a large square hole in the centre, through which is passed a string on which to thread a few hundred. On each string you will find quite a variety of coinage. The value of cash of different quality varies so much that it is quite impossible to say how many are really equivalent to a dollar—*i.e.*, 4s.—but certainly considerably over a thousand; so you can understand that this is not a coin to carry in your purse, but rather one which entails the escort of an attendant.

Once afloat on the lake, we were able to hoist sail and speed on our way toward a village where we anchored for the night, beside a row of very pretty trees which grew right out of the water. We were wakened at daybreak by the blowing of horns on passenger-

boats, and looking forth, we beheld a blue crowd at the village open-air market, from which we got fresh fish and eggs.

After breakfast we landed, and ascended a green hill behind the village, commanding a general view of the lakes. It is all very pretty quiet country—not very exciting—and I do not suppose that any part of this province is so beautiful as Fuh-Kien, though the main range does rise to a height of 3000 feet above the sea, and is snow-capped in winter.

As we advanced, a considerable crowd, of rather an unpleasant sort, gathered around us, many of them reiterating that Miss Laurence was a child-stealer, and that we were both "red-bristled" —a common epithet to describe all foreigners, but to which she replied by pointing to her own raven hair. Some of the women, however, were civil, and asked us to go to their houses to drink tea, but we preferred to climb a higher hill, passing through masses of white dog-roses. A whole school of boys chose to escort us, and were a little inclined to be troublesome, but the opera-glasses helped to civilise them. On our descent the crowd again gathered densely around us, and some of the children threw stones at us; so I was not sorry to get safely back to the boat.

We sculled to the head of the lake against the wind—a nasty sickening motion—and landed at a large and unusually filthy village; walked right across it, escorted by a very disagreeable mob, all anxious for a good look at the red barbarians. Finally we reached the house we sought—that of the native catechist, a fine old man, one of Bishop Russell's converts, who determined to devote the evening of his days to endeavouring to spread the truth in these dark places. A little band of six Christians are all he can number as yet, and now the old man has had a touch of paralysis which threatens to stop his work—but who can prophesy how widely this little root of good may ramify? I felt special interest in this infant church, remembering that from just such apparently insignificant beginnings have grown the now flourishing young churches throughout the land.

The old catechist, who was greatly rejoiced to see us, welcomed us to his humble home; we sat in a tiny room fitted with benches in which he holds his little meetings. About half-a-dozen women (not Christians) had the courage or curiosity to come in for a talk with Miss Laurence, while I tried to make friends with one or two girls, who were evidently horribly frightened at us, the propensities of the barbarian women for child-stealing being a favourite theme of the people.

Such a mob had followed us to the house, that I felt thankful that the bolts of the door were secure, and that the window was guarded by strong iron bars. As it was, the light was darkened by a pyramid of hideous faces, which stared in upon us, as if we were strange animals in a cage!

Our walk back to the boat was not pleasant,—the children howling at us; but Miss Laurence's perfect knowledge of the language and its curious idioms, enabled her to enlist the sympathies of some of the more respectable members of the community. She appealed to one old patriarch by the length of his beard, which appears to be most expressive, judging by results. "Sir," she said, "your beard is of great length! Can you not desire these children to cease from molesting us?" The appeal was successful, and we were allowed to proceed in comparative peace, though the temptation to send a shower of stones as our boat pushed off was irresistible to these small persons.

This does not as yet seem a promising field for a clergyman to undertake; but, having now established similar beginnings at most of the villages in the lake district, the bishop purposes very shortly building a central church, at which these tiny scattered congregations may meet, and so strengthen each other. Those who, like him, have worked in faith through the early years, when they seemed to be ploughing a soil of iron, now see abundant ground for encouragement, and they know that many—as yet antagonistic heathen—believe that "the foreign religion" will overspread the whole land. Just the other day one of the Bible-women here was travelling on a crowded market-boat. Her presence was not recognised, and all on board were heathen; their conversation turned on the foreign religion, and she listened eagerly, and with thankful joy, when the chief spokesman summed up the matter by saying, "IT IS PLAIN THAT OUR RELIGIONS ARE DECLINING, AND THAT THIS RELIGION OF JESUS WILL CONQUER."

To-day a favouring breeze has enabled us to sail all the way down the lake, and (having again been windlassed across the haul-over) we have even sailed down the canals. The latter, however, has been most tedious work, as we have had to pass under fifteen bridges, taking down not only our sail but the heavy mast every time, and as it occupies the front part of the boat, we are kept close prisoners in this little cabin during each of these operations.

All this has occasioned so much delay that the sun is even now setting. Still we have every hope of reaching Ningpo this evening.

CHAPTER XXIV.

COMMENCEMENT OF THE CHEH-KIANG MISSION.

A Chinese clergyman—Presence of non-communicants required—Commencement of the Mission—Miss Aldersey—Difficulty of the language—Mistakes!—Bishop Russell's work—Printing Chinese in Roman letters—Adulteration of tea—An ancestral hall—On the walls—Baby towers—Use of dyed or painted eggs at the spring festival—The small herb on the lintel—A willow bough—Mystic virtue of red.

CHURCH MISSION HOUSE, NINGPO,
Sunday, May 4th.

WHEN at length we did reach the Ningpo haul-over, we found such an immense crowd of boats waiting their turn to be lowered into the river, that we left ours to its fate, and hiring chair-bearers, were carried by many an intricate street and lane right across the city, till at last we reached the bishop's hospitable home, where we were welcomed and fed, and had much to tell.

This morning (being Sunday) I had the option of attending service in English at the foreign settlement, but I need scarcely say I much preferred remaining here, where I accompanied Mrs Russell to the native service in the neat church close by. In the course of long wanderings, I have heard our beautiful liturgy recited in many strange tongues, to me unknown, but this was my first experience of it in Chinese—to my ear the most uncouth of all. A native clergyman preached with much earnestness, and apparently with much eloquence. His long plait of black hair hung over his surplice almost to his feet. (Of course, every exaggerated forehead in the congregation has been well shaven, and every tail has likewise been extra nicely plaited for Sunday, and now hangs down full length in token of respect, for to appear in church with the plait coiled round the head, as is often done at other times for convenience, would be considered most irreverent.)

In deference to Chinese custom, the men and boys occupy one side of the church, and the women the other, but there is no actual partition-line, as in some churches.

There was a full and very attentive congregation, of whom about fifty came forward at Holy Communion, and I am told that the attendance at the other native churches in the city was equally large. There are in this city two other chapels in connection with

this Mission, three connected with the Americans, and two other Protestant Missions. Here there is no clearing out of "The nine"[1] before the celebration, for the presence of non-communicants is required in order to prevent any recurrence of the vile rumours which from time to time have been circulated by the enemy.

As another example of necessary prudence, I may note one tiny but significant detail of the class of concession to Chinese prejudice which is found necessary. In our Baptismal Service, the Rubrick enjoins the priest to take each candidate for baptism by the right hand and place him beside the font. At the baptism of a Chinese woman this symbolic "taking by the hand" is dispensed with, as it would inevitably be misconstrued.

Besides the churches within the city, the Church of England Mission has several small chapels at various out-stations, the whole representing a Christian body—small indeed when compared with the vast pagan population[2] around, but no mean nucleus when viewed as the growth of thirty years' work by so very small a number of devoted men. One of these, the Rev. E. Gough, who is still here, arrived only two years after Mr Russell and Mr Cobbold, who commenced this Mission in 1848.

Not that they were actually the first to break ground in this new field, for so soon as the treaty of Nankin in 1842 secured the admission of foreigners to Ningpo (though religious toleration was not proclaimed till after the treaty of Tien-tsin in 1858), the first to enter was Dr Macgowan of the American Baptist Medical Mis-

1 "*Were there not ten cleansed?* BUT WHERE ARE THE NINE?"—Luke xvii. 17.

2 Although this province of Cheh-kiang, "the Crooked River," is actually the smallest of the eighteen provinces, its population is considerably in excess of that of the majority, being estimated at 26,000,000; whereas the adjoining Fuh-Kien province, which is larger by about 12,000 square miles, has only a population of about 14,000,000.

But whereas the Fuh-Kien C.M.S. Mission, commenced in 1850, and which received its first convert in 1860, now numbers 5800 adherents (that is to say, 3000 persons already baptised, of whom *eighteen hundred are regular communicants*, and the remainder are candidates for baptism)—the C.M.S. Mission, commenced in the province of Cheh-kiang in 1848, numbers as yet only 864 adherents and 392 communicants.

It is estimated that the combined converts of all the Protestant Missions in this province may number about 2000—that is to say, *one out of every ten thousand of the* POPULATION—not a very large proportion certainly, but one which will assuredly increase at a very different rate in the next ten years. The proportion of Protestant Christians in the whole empire is estimated at one in 35,000.

A very remarkable proof of the oft-noted difficulties of creating an interest in Christianity in a great city, especially one largely frequented by foreigners, is afforded by the very disheartening statistics of the C.M.S. Mission at Shanghai, commenced in 1845, which, after the lapse of forty years, numbers only 33 baptised persons! Of course, however, this does not represent the Protestant Christians of Shanghai, as the London Mission and the American Episcopal each have churches and schools in that city.

sion, and a year later came Dr M'Cartee of the American Presbyterian Medical Mission, and these were followed by five clergymen of these denominations.

A most courageous and able Englishwoman, Miss Aldersey, of large private means, had also established a footing in the city, and, after patiently overcoming countless difficulties, succeeded in establishing a large school for Christian girls, which she supported at her own expense. She proved herself a most true and useful friend to her countrymen, and it was under her roof that Bishop Russell found the helpmate of his life, Mrs Russell having been Miss Aldersey's ward, and having accompanied her here on her first arrival. Thus from the early age of fourteen Mrs Russell has been familiar with the Ningpo dialect, and has been able to devote herself heart and soul to the work of the Mission.[1] Miss Aldersey continued her good work here till 1860, when circumstances required her presence in Australia; but her influence still abides in the girls she trained so carefully—now wives and mothers—and in the development of various schemes and branch missions which originated with her.

Late in the afternoon, when Mrs Russell was occupied with her particularly nice-looking Bible-women, the bishop took me for a walk, and amongst other points of especial interest, showed me the ruinous old temple where, on their first arrival in the city, he and Mr Cobbold succeeded in obtaining a lodging—a dreary little room looking out on a dark dead wall, the dulness of which was deemed almost an advantage, inasmuch as it offered nothing to distract their attention from the hard task before them—namely, that of puzzling out a hitherto unknown Chinese dialect,—the language spoken in this province of Cheh-kiang differing from those of

[1] As she continued to do till quite the end of her days on earth, seeking by every means to carry out the great work to which her husband devoted his life. A very few months after these pages were penned, this faithful shepherd of the flock was, in the mysterious Providence of God, called away, when little past what seemed the prime of life. Bishop Russell commenced the Mission at Ningpo, May 13, 1848; was consecrated first Bishop of North China in Westminster Abbey, December 15, 1872; entered into rest, October 5, 1879, and was carried to his grave by four Chinese clergymen, whom he had himself ordained. Never was pastor more sorely mourned than was this singularly sympathetic foreigner, by the flock whom he had gathered with such patient care. That gentle sympathy was also the most marked characteristic of the loving wife, who, though so sorely stricken by her own great bereavement, remained at her post helping and comforting all round her till August 1887, when, after a very few days' illness, she passed peacefully away, bitterly lamented both by Chinese and foreigners.

After Bishop Russell's death his vast diocese was divided, and the Rev. G. E. Moule was consecrated Bishop of Mid-China, and succeeded Bishop Russell at Ningpo, while the Rev. C. P. Scott was consecrated first Bishop of the newly created See of North China.

Canton or of Peking as wholly as though they were the tongues of another race.

The bishop told me how the ludicrous aspect of the thing helped him on at first, when, finding himself alone with a Ningpo man whom an interpreter had engaged to be his teacher, he realised that neither could understand a word spoken by the other! By degrees, however, and by the aid of many signs, they taught one another the names of simple objects, but when it came to expressing abstract ideas, and mastering those tones or inflections which are the sorest stumbling-block to the majority of Chinese students, the difficulties seemed almost insuperable.

Some one once remarked that to master Chinese thoroughly would require "a head of oak, lungs of brass, nerves of steel, a constitution of iron, the patience of Job, and the lifetime of Methuselah!" and I must say this is quite the impression suggested to my own mind, for though my ear for music is keen, I *cannot* distinguish Chinese sounds any more than those of Gaelic; nor can I conceive how any human eye and memory can recollect the THOUSANDS of combinations of little strokes, dots, and curves which must be mastered as the equivalent of our alphabet.

I don't think people in general half realise how great is this preliminary difficulty for all who endeavour to teach others in acquired tongues. We need not go so far as China for a case in point. One of my friends whose lot was cast in a remote district of our own Highlands, deemed it her duty to learn Gaelic in order to be able to comfort her sick poor. After patiently toiling for many months she found she could read a chapter of the Bible pretty fluently, and at last she plucked up courage to ask her teacher whether he thought it would be any pleasure to old Mrs MacKay if she offered to read to her. "Oh, certainly!" was the reply. "Did he then really think that her reading was quite intelligible?" "Oh! by no means; but the poor old woman would be greatly *diverted* by your mistakes!!"

How often and how deeply have I sympathised with that poor young parson who, after grinding for months over break-jaw pronunciations, found himself alone one Sunday, and thought he might venture on reading part of the service! As he read the Commandments he became conscious of an unmistakable movement of surprise running through the congregation, but still he read on to the best of his ability. When at last he escaped to the vestry, he anxiously summoned an interpreter to ask whether he had made any serious mistake. "Oh no," said the other kindly, "nothing

serious—nothing of any consequence!" But when he urged him to say what the mistake really was, he learnt that his trifling error was the omission of the word "NOT" all through the Commandments!!

Here a fruitful source for very odd mistakes is the fact that the identical word, with only a slight variation in the inflection, is often used to express very different objects. An amusing instance of this occurred when Lord Elgin was in Peking. Being much pleased with the excellence of the Mongolian potatoes, he requested his interpreter to order a large supply, of about 240 lb. weight. Judge of the dismay of the latter when an immense cargo of live eels arrived, and he discovered that he had given the order for potatoes with the wrong inflection!

Well, for four years Mr Russell toiled incessantly, vainly struggling with the intricacies of this dreadful tongue, and at the end of that time he felt that he had made so little progress that he was tempted to despair, and actually meditated giving up all further attempt as hopeless. But as the darkest hour is ever next the dawning, just at this critical moment he began to find his daily task becoming less toilsome, the cruelly complicated characters less difficult to decipher, the unpronounceable tones becoming almost natural to ear and tongue, and from this turning-point all seemed steady progress.

Still it was a most trying life of almost utter loneliness in that vast crowded city, and great was the faith and courage requisite to battle on, sustained by the hope that a day would come when in this very stronghold of idolatry, and among the people who despised him as an outer barbarian, he might be able to proclaim that Truth, for love of which he was ready to lay down his life.

All this time the humble student was held in such low esteem by his heathen neighbours, that his own teacher would on no account be seen walking down the street with him. He noticed that whenever he proposed such a thing, as tending to their mutual progress in conversation, some excuse was invariably found, and at last he realised the true reason! Yet such was the influence which he subsequently obtained, that when the Taiping rebels took possession of the city, it was to Mr Russell that the authorities looked as their most efficient go-between, and the rebel leaders granted him free access at all times to their lines, and free permission to carry off thence any of his own flock who might have been captured, and to rescue any of their property which had been plundered. By degrees he so thoroughly mastered the language, that

it became to him as easy as his mother-tongue, and as his natural courtesy made the acquirement of elaborate Chinese forms of politeness no difficult task, he gradually won the respect of the people, many of whom heard him gladly, though of course a comparatively small number could be induced to follow his teaching.

One of the first tasks to be accomplished was that of reducing the vernacular of Ningpo to writing, which had never before been attempted. The idea now occurred to Mr Russell that if, in printing Christian books, he could make use of ordinary Roman type to represent Chinese sounds, instead of the intricate and voluminous Chinese characters, it would greatly facilitate the progress of his students.

Chinese writing was originally hieroglyphic, with pictorial representations of every visible object, and such combinations of these as convey other ideas—*e.g.*, the sun and moon together denote light. In process of time, through careless and rapid copying, these came to be represented by groups of symbolic lines, arranged in perpendicular columns, which are read from the right-hand corner of what we should call the last page, and so backward through the book.

There are said to be upwards of fifty thousand of these written characters, and a very learned man must know most of these—a task alike terrible to sight and memory. But a very large proportion must be learnt by heart before it is possible to read the simplest book. For instance, to read the Bible in Chinese character, you must have a perfect knowledge of four thousand distinct characters; of these, twelve hundred are in common use, and the others are occasional.

I have seen estimates (to show how literary a race are the Chinese) which assume that on an average twenty per cent of the male population in the country districts can read, and perhaps eighty per cent in the cities. Mr Russell came to the conclusion that only about five per cent of those with whom he came in contact could read intelligently, therefore it was evident that the simpler alphabet must prove a boon. So obvious were the advantages to be derived from this new system, now known as the Romanised colloquial, that it was at once introduced into the Mission schools, and the members of the American Presbyterian Mission, fully realising its excellence, joined with Mr Russell in producing in this simple form a considerable portion of the Holy Scriptures and of the Church services, and to these they have added many other books.

They found, as they expected, that the scholars acquired the art of thus reading and writing with amazing facility, and great was

the delight of women and children who found that in a few weeks they could read more fluently than men who had bestowed years of toil in acquiring the ordinary Chinese characters. Thenceforth all students seeking instruction from the Christian teachers in Ningpo commenced their education by learning to read this simple type, and quite poor and ignorant persons come to learn the magic art which enables them to read in a few weeks! It is nevertheless necessary that all students continue to learn the elaborate characters in common use, as any form of education which did not include a knowledge of the Chinese classics would be considered despicable indeed.

How strange it must now seem to the bishop to stand once more in the dreary little room in the old temple, and look back on all the changes he has witnessed here! He was most respectfully received by the old priest, who was then his landlord, and who now has for his tenant a Chinese tea merchant, who rents part of the temple from the gods. We saw all the baskets, ovens, and boxes where a few days hence five hundred busy workers will be engaged in firing, packing, and other processes of tea preparation. To-day they were preparing pounded indigo and gypsum in large flat baskets, to give that "bloom" which England and America consider so essential, though it stands to reason that no withered tea-leaf could possess such! I have watched this remarkable process in the tea-firing *hongs* of foreigners, preparatory to the tea being packed for shipping in cases, which stood all ready ticketed as "pure uncoloured tea," greatly to the edification of the Heathen Chinee (whose own business transactions are said to be remarkably trustworthy). They are, however, less astonished at the fraud than at the singular taste which is said to necessitate such noxious adulteration; but since the foreigners insist on having this nastiness, they have no objection to supplying it themselves, though they take very good care that it shall all be sent out of China!

As we proceeded on our walk, we halted at one of the innumerable ancestral halls which represent so large a phase of the religious life of China. We were highly favoured by the nice old woman in charge of the place; for after showing us the external show hall in which are ranged handsome scarlet and gilded duplicate tablets of all the deceased members of the family, she confided to the bishop that some of them had just been there to worship, and the key of the inner hall happened to be in her hands, so she could let him look in. Accordingly she produced a curious large wooden key and admitted us to the Memorial Chapel itself, which is simply

a very plain counterpart of the other, with all the true tablets of every deceased male member of the clan, on plain very white wood. These ancestral halls answer in a manner to family mausoleums—not that any one is buried here, but that only the tablets of blood-relations are admitted.

Thence, in the cool of the evening, we strolled on to the city walls—the one point in every Chinese town where walking is pleasant, this only being quite unsought, and removed above the crowds and filth of the densely peopled streets. These walls of Ningpo are to me especially attractive—they are quiet, and old, and grey, and in many places are thickly covered with fragrant jessamine and wild honeysuckle.

The Chinese people do not seem to understand what pleasure can be derived from an idle saunter (or, indeed, from walking at all, if they can afford to pay any one else to carry them), so to-day (as is usual) we did not meet a creature, except here and there a group of very untidy Tartar soldiers at their post. Possibly the people are not allowed to come on the walls; but the same thing has struck me elsewhere—namely, that the intense appreciation of beautiful scenery which is so marked a feature in the Japanese character, appears to be strangely wanting in the Chinese. It looks as if they did not see any beauty in nature, and in building their houses seem deliberately to place them so as not to see the view, but by preference look into some dingy courtyard.

These venerable walls of grey granite, which are wide enough on the top to make a good carriage-drive, are five miles in circumference, and are entered by five gates. Within lies the densely peopled city, with a population which I have heard estimated at 300,000. Beyond the walls lies the vast fertile plain thickly dotted with villages, and bounded in the far distance by an amphitheatre of fine hills. Through the great plain winds the Yung river, whose calm waters give a name to this district of Ning-po-foo—*i.e.*, "the Prefecture of the Peaceful Wave."

There is much waste ground just inside of these walls, and now in the spring-time this is green and beautiful. The path reminded me of an English lane, but the tangled roses and honeysuckle grow more luxuriantly than our wild flowers are wont to do. They veil some of the countless graves (which here, as everywhere else in China, form so prominent a feature in the foreground); but their delicate fragrance, alas! cannot overpower the appalling odours which here and there assail us, poisoning the freshness of the evening breezes.

These are wafted from the Baby Towers, two of which we had to pass. They are square in shape, with small windows about twelve feet from the ground, somewhat resembling pigeon-towers. These strange dovecots are built to receive the bodies of such babies as die too young to have fully developed souls, and therefore there is no necessity to waste coffins on them, or even to take the trouble of burying them in the bosom of mother earth; so the insignificant little corpse is handed over to a coolie, who, for the sum of forty cash (equal to about 2½d.), carries it away, ostensibly to throw it into one of these towers, but if he should not choose to go so far, he gets rid of it somehow,—no questions are asked, and there are plenty of prowling dogs ever on the watch seeking what they may devour.[1] To-day several poor uncoffined mites were lying outside the towers, shrouded only in a morsel of old matting; apparently they had been brought by some one who had failed to throw them in at the window, in which, by the way, one had stuck fast!

Some of these poor little creatures are brought here alive and left to die, and some of these have been rescued and carried to foundling hospitals. The neighbourhood was so pestiferous that we could only pause a moment to look at "an institution" which, although so horrible, is so characteristic of this race, who pay such unbounded reverence to the powerful dead who could harm them. Most of the bodies deposited here are those of girl-babies who have been intentionally put to death, but older children are often thrown in; indeed, I am told that even a boy who dies under the age of seven years does not receive ancestor-worship, as it is supposed that he must have been animated by a soul which had escaped from Purgatory before its time of expiation was finished, and has now been recaptured by the officials of Yen-Lo-Wong and carried back to finish its term! So there can be no child-angels in the Buddhist heaven!

Hurrying far from these towers of pestilence, we passed out of the city by one of its gates, and returned by a circuitous path between the river and the base of the wall, a walk which seemed all too short, for the bishop was telling me some of his many personal memories of events here—of good days and evil—of the living and of the dead—and more especially of the Taipings, whose occupation of the city was a matter not soon to be forgotten.

The evening ended (as each day here begins and ends) with household prayers, at which all the Chinese servants and "helps," and all the picturesque little Chinese children, are not only present,

[1] See 'Ancestor-worship,' p. 203.

but each, down to the little people six years old, have their own books, and read verses in their turn. The little toddles who are too small to read, sit still with an appearance of superlative goodness and supernatural gravity.

May 5th.

I have spent most of the day in the beautiful Fuh-Kien Temple, sketching the great dragon pillars, which are of very fine carved stone. As we passed through the city I noticed that every one seems to be feasting on hard-boiled eggs, which I am told is done to-day with a view to averting headache in the ensuing twelvemonth—an appeal to luck, akin to our custom of eating Christmas pies with the same view towards the coming year!

But apart from this, I have noticed with interest that the practice of giving and eating hard-boiled dyed eggs (which, albeit a universal feature of the spring festival in all lands, is so naturally associated in our minds with Easter-tide) is fully observed here.

I believe that throughout China this is done as a matter of family rejoicing when a child is born, or on the recurrence of its birthday; but at this special season I have observed an unusually large number of red eggs offered for sale in the streets—I saw many such at Foo-Chow, and others elaborately painted with mythological subjects, but it did not occur to me to buy any. Here I see some specially artistic ones which were bought at Easter, and I have tried to get some similar, but none of the egg merchants seem disposed to procure such objects out of the proper season.

I am told that another variety of egg festival is celebrated during three days in the beginning of February, when, as on our own Shrove-Tuesday, everybody—rich and poor—is supposed to eat pancakes.

Amongst the many minor points of curious interest which arrested my notice, while slowly wandering on foot through many of the intricate streets of Foo-Chow, there was one of which I could obtain no solution, though my companion was well versed in many details of Chinese custom—namely, that on the 26th April, which happened to be a fortnight before Easter, a small bunch of a weed which appeared to me identical with what we call shepherd's-purse, was bound with a bit of red rag and nailed on to the upright posts of every window and doorway. Here, in Ningpo, I am told that always just at Easter-time all the people

nail a branch of willow on their doors, because once when the city was besieged, the General, having a brother living there, gave him this sign, which the soldiers were commanded to respect. The brother not caring to be saved alone, instructed all his friends and kinsmen to adopt this token, and many other citizens followed their example without understanding why, and thus escaped massacre.

Whatever may have really been the origin of this custom, the season at which it is observed, and the bit of red cloth nailed to each door-post, can scarcely fail to suggest that bunch of hyssop (or small herb) dipped in blood,[1] wherewith the lintel and side-posts of every Israelitish door were to be stricken, that—

"The Angel of Death, beholding the sign, might pass over."

I do not myself know what plant is recognised as hyssop, but Archdeacon Gray mentions that in Canton, on the day preceding a funeral, it is sometimes customary for a procession of priests, either Taouist or Buddhist, to march in gorgeous apparel through the streets along which the funeral is to pass, playing on rude instruments of music in order to exorcise evil spirits. The procession is headed by a young man bearing a small tub of holy water, and *carrying in his right hand a bunch of hyssop*, which he repeatedly dips in the holy water, and therewith sprinkles the streets and the floor of every shop in order to drive thence any lurking evil spirits.

Whatever may be the mystic virtue attaching to the combination of certain plants with symbolic scarlet, we certainly have it in our own British isles, where, as we well know—

"Rowan-tree and red threid
Gar the witches tyne their speed!"[2]

Therefore did the careful Scotch cowherd, till very recent years, tie a sprig of mountain-ash with red twine to the door of the byre, or to the left horn of his cattle, or else twisted a red thread round the cow's tail. For the same reason does a certain old horse-shoe, presented to me on one of the Hebridean isles as an old family luck-shoe, now hang on my door entwined with scarlet braid and two twigs of rowan laid crosswise!

[1] The combination of the red cloth and the small herb also recalls the curious Levitical law for the cleansing of lepers, and of houses wherein is leprosy—the *scarlet wool and the hyssop*, which were to be dipped in the blood of a bird that had been killed in an earthenware vessel over running water, wherewith the leper or the house was to be sprinkled seven times. Levit. xiv. 4-7 and 49-53.

[2] See 'In the Hebrides,' pp. 197, 217. C. F. Gordon Cumming. Chatto & Windus.

Here in China, in place of a horse-shoe, the most efficacious thing to keep off powers of evil is a sword-shaped toy, made of hundreds of copper cash, ingeniously fastened together with red thread. Charms written on red paper also frighten away devils; and fire-crackers, which are burnt for the same purpose, are always made up in scarlet covers.

In building a house, a careful Chinaman (having first engaged Taouist priests to sprinkle the ground with holy water, in order to drive thence all bad spirits) takes care to provide a first-class piece of timber for a ridge-beam. Not only is this painted red, but it is decorated with festoons of red cloth, or at least with strips of red paper, blessed by the priest, and smeared with the blood from the comb of a young cock sacrificed for this purpose. From this ridge-pole is sometimes suspended a basket containing various symbols of good fortune, amongst others *a hank of red thread.*

This use of red as an amulet is strangely widespread; it figures in the use of red cloth and red thread by the wizards of Mongolia, and also of certain aboriginal tribes of Hindoostan. It has its place in medicine lore too. Both in Scotland and in the West Indies red flannel worn round the throat is supposed to prevent whooping-cough; and in England we still sometimes hear of a red rag worn round the throat to cure toothache, or that a scarlet silk thread with nine knots, so worn, will stop nose-bleeding.

So also in Chinese stories, a peculiar virtue is attributed to red pills; and when a sick man is supposed to be afflicted by evil spirits, a geomancer writes a charm with a new vermilion pencil on yellow paper cut in the form of cash. He burns one of these charms, swallows the ash in cold water, and places another over his door. Then the exorcist (who is generally a Taouist priest, robed in red) ministers before a temporary altar, having in his hand a wooden sword made from a lightning-stricken tree; round this is wrapped a strip of red cloth.

It is not only the Taouist priest who secures the good influences of red; the torches which illuminate the great open court at the Confucian midnight festival are wrapped in scarlet cloth, and fastened on tall red poles. Red candles are burnt on Buddhist altars, and red dumplings are there offered. Red eggs are offered by women at certain shrines, and (at least in Southern China) the ashes of Buddhist monks who have been cremated are sewn up in bags of red cloth.

In legendary lore, the mother of the great Laou-tze, founder of the Taouist religion, was fed daily for a period of eighty-one years

before his birth by a red cloud which came down from heaven; and earthly parents of the present day are careful early to enlist all good that emanates from red on behalf of a young child—certainly on that of a boy,—girls are of small account! In the small boy his parents discern the future priest of the ancestral altar, so when he is a month old he is clothed in a bright red dress, receives his infantile name, and his head having been shaved for the first time, he is presented with a cap on which are eight small metal figures representing the eight angels. He is also presented with a red chair and a red bedstead. As he grows older his careful mother will see that his pockets are lined with red; and on any days when evil spirits might come about, a red silk braid is entwined in the boy's long plait.

At the solemn betrothal of a Chinese damsel, the bridegroom-elect sends her a pair of bracelets tied together with red twine, and at the wedding two wine-cups connected by a red silk thread are drained by the bride and bridegroom.[1]

At a wedding in Northern China, the bride is carried in a sedan-chair covered with scarlet cloth, and the porters who carry her wedding-presents wear conical felt hats, each with a red feather sticking erect from the apex. In Southern China wealthy folk hire a wedding-chair gorgeously gilded and richly decorated with little figures like blue and green enamel, but really made of the lustrous kingfishers' feathers; in this case a red cloth handsomely fringed is thrown over the chair. Poor people have to be satisfied with a rude wooden bridal chair simply painted red, with a charm written on red paper suspended above the door.

The chair, which is sent by the bridegroom, is accompanied by his friend (or best man), who is the bearer of a letter written on red paper tinged with gold, entreating the lady to take her place therein. The bride is attired in a scarlet dress ornamented with gold, and the wedding-veil is of crimson silk. All her presents are carried in very showy red boxes by men in red tunics. Bearers similarly attired carry scarlet boards on which, in letters of gold, are inscribed the names of the ancestors of both bride and bridegroom. Others carry on long poles large handsome lanterns, each containing a fine red candle. Pigs roasted whole are carried on scarlet trays, and occasionally the bridal procession is headed by a goat,

[1] Similarly, at a Mahratta wedding, the young couple are tied together by a consecrated scarlet scarf. See 'In the Himalayas and on the Indian Plains,' p. 590. C. F. Gordon Cumming. Chatto & Windus.

with gilded horns[1] and a garland made of red paper. Both at weddings and funerals small presents of money are sometimes presented to guests in crimson envelopes.

A wealthy Chinese funeral contrives to symbolise mourning by the aid of so many rich colours that one more or less might pass unheeded were we not aware of the special attributes of the richly embroidered scarlet pall which covers the huge coffin, and of the tall red poles to which are attached the flags and lanterns to be carried in the procession, as also the great red boards on which are emblazoned the name and titles of the dead and of his ancestors. A great scarlet umbrella is a marked feature in an official funeral. On the coffin itself is placed a decoration of red paper, on which is inscribed the character which denotes happiness. On the other hand, during a season of national mourning, the ordinary red tassel worn on the hats of officials is replaced by a white one—the red coverings of household furniture are removed, and blue or white covers are substituted. All red ornaments are taken off sign-boards, which are then adorned with white decorations and streamers of blue calico.

But really there seems no end to the occasions when lucky red comes into play! On New Year's eve, scribes sit in the open street driving a brisk trade by inscribing lucky sentences on red paper, which are bought by the community to paste on their doors on the morrow. Visiting-cards are printed on bright crimson paper.

At the great official ploughing-match which is held in the spring-time in the neighbourhood of every city, as a special appeal to the God of Agriculture, the great mandarins, assuming the dress of peasants, plough with red ploughs.

In short, I know of no other country where so much symbolism is attached to different colours, and red appears to have a monopoly of all good.

[1] Among the numerous symbols which grace the marriage ceremonial in some parts of China, are a pair of wild geese, which are sent by the bridegroom to the parents of the bride-elect to typify mutual constancy, as it is supposed that these birds, having selected one another in youth, continue faithful throughout life, and that should either die, the survivor mourns inconsolable until his life's end.

As it is not always easy, even in China, to catch a wild goose and gander, tame ones are sometimes substituted, or sometimes even wooden or tin models, which are perhaps preferable at a wedding-feast, as the bridegroom's envoy has to enter the bride's house with a goose in each hand, and these are placed upon a table, where they are expected to sit still during the prolonged ceremonies!

Another emblem to be borne in the procession is a dwarf orange-tree, laden not only with its own fruit, but with many strings of cash, to typify both wealth and bairns!

CHAPTER XXV.

AMONG THE AZALEAS.

Gods on leave of absence—Play-actors despised—Start for the "Snowy Valley"—A strange bridge—Lovely nature—Interior of a farmhouse—The "Head of Snow" Monastery—A beautiful shrub—Tea coolie-girls—Tea-drying—Mulberry-orchards—Silk-worms—Care in rearing them—Expectant mothers not to approach them!—The Goddess of Silk-worms—Down the river on a raft—A discriminating youth!

Tuesday, 6th May.

The Kiang Teen being again in harbour, Captain Steele, as a sympathetic curio-hunter, invited me to a very early breakfast on board, to be followed by a prowl in the city; so I started at 6.30 in the cool of the morning, and after breakfast we explored china-shops and wood-carvers—pawn-shops, where old theatrical dresses of rich silk or satin, beautifully embroidered, lay piled on the floors, in tempting display. I invested in some dainty enamel cups, and a set of silver shields, which are worn by Chinese ladies to protect their horribly long nails. These shields project fully two inches beyond the finger, and a hand thus armed is like the talon of some dangerous bird of prey, capable of inflicting most cruel scratches!

Speaking of scratches, I find that in the course of this morning's ramble I have been the victim of some inquisitive Chinaman's sharp scissors, for a neat small square has been cut from the edge of my new waterproof cloak, evidently with a view to discovering the secret of how to make it. Rather an annoying mode of investigation!

We looked into various temples, including one which is undergoing repairs, and very dusty and unsuggestive of reverence is its present condition. But due provision is made for this. I noticed that all the images have little strips of pink paper pasted over their eyes; and on inquiry why this was done, the priest explained that these are prayers to the several gods, telling them that repairs are necessary, and beseeching them kindly to retire from the temple till it is again made meet for their presence. It is assumed that these obliging deities have complied with the petition, so for the present the images are only images, and have no special sanctity.

We also visited a temple sacred to the patron god of actors, who are a very numerous body, and here have their own Guild, which

always combines the purposes of club, theatre, and temple. Notwithstanding the delight of the Chinese (and their gods) in theatrical entertainments, the profession of actors is sorely despised, and they are subject to most galling special social disabilities. By law, policemen, boatmen, *play-actors*, and *slaves* are forbidden to marry any woman who is not of the grade to which they severally belong. When a marriage in any other rank of life is being arranged, the primary duty of the "go-between" or match-maker is to ascertain beyond all doubt that neither party is related to play-actors, slaves, or boat-people, and that they are free from taint of leprosy, lunacy, or crime.

These disabilities extend to their children, who are excluded from the privilege of competing for any literary honour, consequently they can never hold any official employment. In the sumptuary laws which regulate each item of the dress (and its material) to be worn by each separate class in the empire, play-actors (who in this case are classed with slaves and bastards) are forbidden to wear dresses made of true silk, though they are permitted to wear a very coarse silk, which is obtained from the large wild silk-worms which feed on oak-trees, and which is known as mountain silk. On no account may they presume to wear a dress embroidered with gold thread. (That privilege, however, is denied to all the common people.) In winter they are permitted to line their robes with sheepskin or goatskin, but these classes are strictly forbidden to make use of any other fur.

They are, moreover, exceptions to that special privilege which is granted to old age of every other degree. The imperial grace permits every respectable Chinaman who attains the age of seventy to assume the official dress which marks an officer of the ninth degree, while at ninety years of age he is promoted to a still more honourable official dress. But though an actor may be the most philanthropic and virtuous of men, and though he may live to be a hundred, he is debarred from all such privileges.

Returning to the Mission, I learnt that the bishop has most kindly arranged that as Miss Laurence must shortly visit some of the outlying villages, she is to do so immediately, so that under her wing I too may be enabled to see something more of the neighbourhood. We are therefore to start to-night for a district known as the "Snowy Valley," famous for its beauty, but chiefly for its wealth of azaleas. This time we shall be a trio of foreign barbarians, being accompanied by a young lady who has recently arrived, and has yet to learn her work and the dreadful language.

IN THE SHIH-DOZE—*i.e.*, "HEAD OF SNOW"—
BUDDHIST MONASTERY,
May 7th.

Yesterday evening, in the mellow light of a full moon, we started for the river, where the Mission boat lay ready for us. The night was so beautiful that we sorely grudged being obliged to sleep, but having a long day before us, we resolutely turned in soon after we had passed the Bridge of Boats (one of which slips out to let us through). These form a bridge two hundred yards long. When we awoke at daybreak we were about twenty miles from Ningpo, and were nearing the village of Kong-ke'o, where we anchored just above an extraordinary bridge supported on piers formed by clusters of separate upright stones. It is covered in with woodwork, and has a tiled roof and shops at either end—such an eccentric-looking concern!

Here we found the people extremely civil, thanks to the humanising influence of the American Mission, which has had a station here for some years, and a neat church.

After early breakfast, we started in chairs, with two servants and six luggage-coolies, on a further expedition of twenty miles to the Snowy Valley. Our route lay through a pretty country, chiefly agricultural. The people were planting out their rice, which, being first sown in one thick mass, is thence transplanted, when a few inches high, to the large fields. I can fancy no more unpleasant task than rice-planting in all its stages, as it involves standing up to the knees in soft mud, and usually inhaling a damp miasma. But to the mere spectator, the exquisite green of growing rice is a delight to the eye unequalled by any other crop. Here and there fine willow-trees and fragrant "Pride of India" mark the course of some stream meandering through the plain, and occasionally we passed an ungainly-looking farm-buffalo, on whose shoulders is generally perched a tiny boy with shaven brow and two young plaits, but guiltless of clothing. These small persons are herd laddies, whose duty it is to prevent the buffaloes from straying too far.

As long as our route lay on the levels near the river, we passed through fields of the loveliest pink clover, golden rape, and yellow buttercups, and clumps of trees literally embowered in clustering roses and fragrant jessamine. A most tantalising plant here grows abundantly—a sort of spurious strawberry, of a rich scarlet, very inviting to the eye, but which tastes just like a bit of dry earth. The leaf, the blossom, and the fruit so singularly resemble the

genuine article, that I was tempted to taste them again and again before I could persuade myself that they were truly only shams.

We halted at two roadside temples, each with a most lavish display of excellent wood-carving. In one there are about fifty most delicately carved large panels, each of which is a really artistic picture in wood. But all are incrusted with thick coats of dust, and are apparently quite uncared for.

We were invited to enter what seemed a well-to-do farmhouse, which (being curious in the matter of domestic interiors) I was glad to do. The state of filth, however, was altogether indescribable—not filthy in the sense of many a miserable overcrowded dwelling in our own cities, for Chinese economy carefully preserves all sewage, but foul with accumulations of cobwebs and rubbish, every bit of woodwork being incrusted with the dirt of ages. Really handsome wood-carving was so filled up with dirt as to be almost unnoticed. In one corner stood a handsome bedstead, beneath which lay heaps of refuse; the walls and floor were all coated with dirt; the beams supporting the roof were smoke-blackened. Altogether, my impressions of this sample home were not pleasant.

We camped for luncheon on a grassy knoll under a group of pleasant shady trees, but, of course, a crowd quickly assembled to gaze at us—not uncivilly, however.

When we commenced the ascent of the valley we soon found ourselves in the azalea belt, and sorely we regretted not having been a fortnight earlier; for though the thickets of orange azalea are beyond measure gorgeous, the crimson is all faded, and the ground blood-red with the fallen blossoms, telling what must have been their vanished glory. As to the lilac azaleas, scarcely a lingering blossom remains to tell of their delicate beauty. But there are still masses of that other lilac flower which we saw at Tien Dong, and among the undergrowth, handsome fronds of Solomon's-seal greeted us like old friends. So too did rich trails of fragrant honeysuckle, and the snowy blossoms of delicious hawthorn, of two sorts—our own familiar May and a Chinese variety, both blooming in as rich perfection as if in an English lane. No wonder that happy birds here sing so joyously! and the cuckoo's note sounded so natural as almost to make us forget how far from home we were.

Passing a very quaint rest-house which is built *on* an arched bridge, and a fine waterfall over sheer crags, we reached the Shih-doze or "Head of Snow" Monastery—in every respect a very in-

ferior building to that at Tien Dong. Externally the buildings are of the same harmonious red and grey colouring, but the temple is shabby, and the images are hideous. The whole place is in rather a ruinous condition, and we find it tenanted by only eight brethren, who, however, received us kindly, and have given us their best guest-chamber, of which I regret to chronicle that it is a rickety, tumble-down old room. Its furnishings consist of a shaky table, two chairs, and some wooden boards on trestles to act as bedsteads. However, we have brought our own bedding, a brass basin, and cooked food, and there is never any difficulty about hot kettles and tea, so we have contrived to make ourselves fairly comfortable, and being very tired, have resolved not to go down to see the night-service in the ugly temple.

May 8th.

That final resolution was fated to be broken, for we were awakened at 2 A.M. by the deep booming tones of the great bell, which is struck on the outside by the swinging of a wooden beam. This was followed by the beating of the great temple drum. It sounded very solemn in the stillness of night, and when the chanting began, interest overcame weariness, and we found our way down the dark rickety stairs and through the long passages, past the great empty kitchen and the shrine of the kitchen god, and across the moonlit court, till we reached the temple, where we stood silently in the shadow of a great pillar, where our presence was not perceived. The eight brethren were all present in full dress, wearing the mantle fastened on the left breast, with the green jade hook and ring—I have generally seen this fastening on the right side. One knelt apart, one beat the Nû-koo, which is a wooden skull-shaped drum, and the remaining six walked round and round in sunwise circle while reiterating some sentence. Then all knelt and prostrated themselves again and again most devoutly. There was only one light in the temple, a large dim lamp which is kept ever burning before the great altar—a light so feeble that all ugliness of detail was lost, and there remained only a somewhat weird but fine general effect of gilded images and broad shadows.

We passed hence into the clear moonlight, and listened to the croaking of legions of frogs in the neighbouring rice-fields, till the monotony suggested a return to our pillows.

We woke again before "the outgoing of the sun," and after early breakfast had a charming excursion further up the valley, first halting at Ingden—*i.e.*, "Shady Dell"—a very picturesque

waterfall in a deep rocky gorge, and next at a picturesque ruined bridge, literally covered by a veil of creeping roses. Here we lay on cool grass beneath dark fir-trees, with the river flowing past us, and we enjoyed our luncheon notwithstanding the steady gaze of many spectators, who speedily assembled to see the strange sight of three foreign women.

Further up the valley we came to another very fine fall, with a single-arch bridge spanning the stream just above it. Everywhere we found masses of white roses, hawthorn, golden azalea, and lingering patches of scarlet and crimson, but the lilac azaleas are all gone. Just as we were starting to return, I espied in a thicket a splendid tree-shrub with glorious spikes of lavender-coloured blossom, like a glorified foxglove, only set like the flower of the horse-chestnut. As it was quite new to me, I made my way to the spot, and found what I can only describe as a tree-gloxinia—the leaves large and velvety, and on each spike from twenty to seventy bell-like blossoms, just like a gloxinia. It is truly a magnificent shrub. I gathered five great spikes, which were as much as I was able to carry.[1]

We met large parties of men returning from the upper hills with large baskets of bamboo-shoots, generally about eighteen inches long by four thick. They are used as vegetables. Some had large bundles of much younger shoots, resembling overgrown asparagus. We had some of the latter for supper, and found them fresh and tender.

I am greatly struck by the number of girls whom we meet working as tea-coolies, and by the enormous burdens which they carry slung from a bamboo which rests on their shoulder. Each girl carries two bags thus slung, the weight of a bag being half a *picul*, which is upwards of 60 lb. Thus heavily burdened, a party of these bright, pleasant-looking young women march a dozen miles or more, chatting and singing as they go. They are sturdy rosy lassies, all dressed alike, in the invariable indigo-coloured blouse, short loose trousers, and bare legs. Many of them are really pretty, and all have their glossy hair neatly dressed, and adorned with some bright silken blossom.

The tea-plantations are scattered over the hills, forming little dotted patches, of regularly planted bushes. Here the girls and

[1] I afterwards learned that this beautiful shrub is known to botanists as *Paullownia imperialis*. It is largely cultivated in Japan, where it is known as the KIRI, and is valued on account of the hardness of its wood, which is used for making clogs. The flower-loving Japanese have shown their appreciation of its beauty by adopting it as the Mikado's house-crest.

women are busy selecting the young green leaves, which they pick and collect in large basket-work trays of split bamboo. The leaves are then spread on mats, and are left in the sun till they are partially dried. After this, they are placed in very large flat circular trays, and barefooted coolies proceed to use their feet as rollers, and twirl the leaves round and round, till each has acquired an individual curl. This doesn't sound very nice, does it?

Then the whole process is repeated a second time. The leaves have another turn in the sun, another foot-curling, and a more elaborate hand-rubbing. Then once more they are exposed to the sun, till they are so dried that no trace of green remains. They are then packed in bags, and are sent off to the tea merchants to be fired under their own supervision in the great tea *hongs*, where the hitherto unadulterated leaf receives that coating of indigo and gypsum to which I have already alluded. Some of the tea farmers have charcoal stoves in their own houses, where firing is done on a small scale—but this is exceptional.

Here, in the court of the temple, there are many large flat baskets and mats where the tea-leaves from the monastic "glebe" are drying. The said glebe consists of most rugged little fields, high on the hillsides.

On our return, when we were a little rested, we went down to the temple in order to stand beside the great bell while it was being struck on the outside with the heavy wooden beam which is suspended so as to swing against the bell, producing a deep solemn tone which reverberates through the hills, awakening the ghostly echoes.

Now we are all fairly tired out, so no night-services will tempt us down to-night!

NINGPO, *Saturday*, 10*th*.

Here we are once more enjoying a delightful rest in this most peaceful home, yesterday having proved a somewhat long, though very interesting day. We left the monastery after a 5 A.M. breakfast. My companions decided on walking the five miles to the river, but secured coolies to carry me and our baggage. The country is all very pretty, though the mountains are not nearly so high as those in the Fuh-Kien province. Though this is part of a great range with many notable peaks, there is nothing here higher than 3000 feet above the sea-level.

We passed by fields of lovely and fragrant pink clover, and by others more conspicuous in their gay beauty of blood-red poppies;

for alas! since foreign opium may no longer be legally excluded, the Chinese farmer thinks he may as well secure the profit, and Government officials herein seeing a hope of driving out the foreign poison, ignore the ever-increasing and most grievous extension of this cultivation, which is working such rapidly increasing ruin throughout the empire; so that much of the best land which hitherto has yielded rich grains, is now given over to this beautiful but baneful crop. Here, in place of the snow-white opium-poppy of India, the red predominates, although its produce is deemed very inferior to the white.

On some of the more advanced fields, the poppy-heads are already ripe—that is to say, they are full-sized, though still green. When the head becomes dry the juice no longer flows, so it is necessary to secure the opium at the exact moment of maturity.

The cultivators pass carefully along each row of poppies, and with a small sharp knife make a slight incision all round each seed-pod, taking care not to cut deep lest the juice should flow inward and be lost in the seed-cavity. A thick milky juice at once exudes along the cut, and must be left undisturbed for several hours during the heat of the day exposed to the sun's rays, when it assumes a resinous appearance, and is scraped off with a knife, and rolled up in soft lumps. These are sprinkled with a powder, which prevents their adhering together in one solid mass. They are rolled up in poppy-leaves, and left to dry in the sun, when the opium becomes of a rich dark-brown colour.

A pleasanter industry to note is the rearing of silk-worms without number, this being one of the chief silk-producing provinces.

A large proportion of the inhabitants are employed in the care of "The Precious Ones," as they are called. So great mulberry-orchards are cultivated in order to supply leaves for the hungry worms, and as the trees are kept low to enrich the foliage, men (and I have seen women also) save time by climbing the trees, and combine pruning with gathering by cutting off large branches, which they throw down,[1] and then the women and children pick off the leaves, wasting the half-ripe fruit *which grows along the stem*. The fruit, however, is insipid even when ripe. The branches thus cut are bound in fagots and sold as firewood. One advantage in this season of drought is that the leaves do not require the careful drying which is necessary in damper climates—even in

[1] In this province, when heathen neighbours wish to persecute native Christians, the natural preliminary is to threaten to cut their mulberry-trees, thus at one stroke destroying their whole stock-in-trade, by ensuring the death of the worms.

tropical Pacific isles, and indeed here also, whenever rainy or even damp weather sets in. On the other hand, withered leaves must on no account be used.

The silk-worms, which now look like great fat white maggots, lie in masses in large flat baskets, and are fed incessantly. Indeed their appetite during this stage of existence is something amazing. When first hatched from their tiny eggs these almost invisible atoms (which are like morsels of black hair) are supplied with fresh food every half-hour; their nurses (ignoring the fact that creatures indigenous to Chinese mulberry-trees are probably able to feed themselves) take the trouble to mince the leaves very fine before supplying them to the precious babies! When they are past their first infancy they are fed ONLY *twenty-four times a-day!* but even this trifling amount of attention must make it a matter of rejoicing when they are so full-grown as only to require four meals a-day. Happily, in the course of its hungry life each worm takes three days' sleep, one day at a time, at intervals of a week, and on each occasion it changes its skin. The first is black, the second amber-coloured, the third white. But as the little creatures are hatched on different days, it follows that they sleep on different days, so there are always plenty of hungry waking ones requiring attendance.

Indeed, from first to last the care bestowed on them is incessant, beginning with the careful selection of the parent moths, only the finest being allowed to survive. Each mother-moth produces about five hundred tiny eggs, which are deposited with the greatest regularity on pieces of coarse paper. (In the northern provinces, where the cold is greater, they are supplied with pieces of cloth instead.) These sheets of paper are gently dipped into fresh water, and are then hung up to dry, being thus left suspended to horizontal bamboos all through the autumn. In bleak December these cloths are removed to a room which has been carefully swept, and which is subject to all the good influences of light and aspect.

In February the eggs are again washed (sometimes tepid water is poured over them for a considerable time to equalise the date of their hatching), they are then placed on mats, which are spread on shelves extending all round the room. It is considered desirable that these shelves should be made of bamboo, as being a scentless wood, and the worms are supposed to be very sensitive to all odours. Great care is taken to secure their house from all bad smells, though it is difficult to conceive by what standard this subtle matter is decided, as the whole Chinese nation are apparently altogether devoid of the sense of smell!

The temperature of the silk-worm house is also carefully regulated — the thermometer by which it is determined being the human body! The attendant is required periodically to throw off his raiment, and so enter the presence of "The Precious Ones"; should he thus become conscious that the air is damp or cool, he must at once bring in a charcoal stove. He must specially guard against any breath of wind blowing into the house, as this produces a disease akin to rheumatism. Should a thunderstorm arise, he must quickly cover all the shelves or trays with sheets of very thick paper, to lessen the glare of the lightning, which is supposed to alarm the worms. Unfortunately, the roar of the thunder cannot be shut out, and these little creatures are supposed to be so sensitive to noise that those who approach them must be careful only to whisper with bated breath, if indeed any speech be necessary. (Only think what blessed peace and quietness one might secure by finding summer quarters on a silk farm, which is not only an unusually clean brick house, but, moreover, isolated in the midst of its mulberry-groves, to secure silence!)

Ceaseless war is also waged against flies which attack the young worms, and try to deposit their eggs upon their bodies.

One item of attention to the health of the young worms consists in a judicious change of diet—a little fine flour of rice, green peas, and black beans being administered as an occasional tonic during their thirty-two days of worm-life. Then they commence spinning, and work for about five days, when the cocoons are complete, and the spinners who have thus prepared their sarcophagi proceed to transform themselves into mummy-like chrysalids, vainly hoping to be allowed to await their resurrection undisturbed. This, of course, is by no means the intention of the silk farmer, who immediately collects the cocoons and places them on bamboo shelves, near a slow fire of charcoal, the heat of which effectually kills the self-imprisoned spinners, who otherwise would, of course, break through the cocoon and cut the silk.

If only the silk-worms are as economical as their human masters, it might soothe their spirits to know that these poor little mummies are by no means wasted, for when dexterous human fingers have unwound the silken cocoons (producing therefrom the loveliest glossy skeins, some golden, some of shining whiteness), all the chrysalids are carefully collected, boiled, and eaten, being esteemed a great delicacy!

There appears every reason to believe that this whole process has continued unchanged from year to year for at least forty-five centuries, when (about B.C. 2700) it seems to have occurred to the

Empress Si Ling-Chee, the wife of the Emperor Hungtai, to establish sericulture as a definite industry, wherein she and the ladies of her household set the example by domesticating the worms which had hitherto wandered at large in the wild-mulberry groves; under her fostering care silken fabrics were woven as offerings to the national gods. Of course the imperial example was quickly followed in all parts of the empire where it was found that the creatures would flourish; and after the death of the Empress Si Ling-Chee, this benefactress of the world was deified, and has thenceforth been worshipped as the Goddess of Silk-worms.

In this province of Cheh-kiang are several temples dedicated to her worship, and I suppose there are the same in other provinces, as "The Cocoon Festival" in November is one of the national holy days observed by all good Chinamen, when the mandarins and officials are required to solemnise a great State service, therein following the example which is annually set by the Empress and the ladies of her Court at Peking. These repair in state to the temple of the lady who discovered the use of silk, and they proceed to gather leaves from the temple mulberry-trees, the Empress using golden scissors, and her ladies silver ones. When they have fed the temple silk-worms and offered sacrifice to the goddess, they proceed, with their own delicate fingers, to unwind several cocoons, as an example to all the silk-workers. Considering what a practised hand is required to unwind these without breaking the silk, it is to be feared that the imperial labour may not prove altogether remunerative! However, the intention is excellent, and like the Emperor's ploughing at the Temple of Agriculture, it is supposed in a manner to consecrate a vast national industry.

Various superstitious ceremonies are enjoined for the good of the worms. In some parts of Britain it is customary to bestow very reverential attention on bees, as it is supposed that they will abandon a careless family which neglects to inform them of its births, deaths, and marriages. Here the silk-worms are quite as particular and far less sympathetic. Whoever visits them, including their own attendants, must, ere crossing the threshold, purify himself by dipping a bunch of mulberry-leaves in water, and therewith sprinkling himself. In some districts a few grains of sand are sprinkled on the head in lieu of water (just as a Mohammedan may symbolise his ceremonial ablutions by a dry rub with sand when water cannot be obtained). The attendants are also required to abstain from eating certain meats and vegetables while they are in waiting on "The Precious Ones." Visits from strangers are generally un-

welcome, while sick or deformed persons are strictly prohibited from coming near. On no account must any one mourning for the dead approach them till seven weeks have elapsed—and on no consideration whatever may a woman who hopes soon to increase her family enter the silk-worms' house!

(For that matter, ladies under these circumstances are subject to many very odd ceremonial restrictions. Such an one may on no account approach a corpse, however near and dear to her the deceased may have been. Neither may she approach ducks who are sitting on their eggs! For a month after the birth of a child, no one except her nurse may approach the mother. A large bunch of evergreens hung up at the door warns visitors not to call—they may not even leave cards! Should any person be obliged to enter the house during these thirty days, he becomes subject to the same law of uncleanness as all the persons living in the house, none of whom may enter any public temple during this period! When the month has expired, the happy father, accompanied by one of his wife's handmaids, goes to return thanks in one of the temples, but the mother must not leave the house for a hundred days! The woman who is so unfortunate as to die in her confinement, finds herself subject to special penalties in Purgatory, till she is released by the sacrifices offered on her behalf in the temple.)

On reaching the point of the river where we were to embark, we found a multitude of rafts, each formed by about eight or ten bamboos, fastened together, and turned up on one end so as to form a sort of prow. The water here is so extremely shallow that no manner of boat could float, so these frail rafts absorb all the traffic. It seems that most of the said traffic travels seaward, so the rafts which return up-stream without a cargo are often laid one upon the other, three deep, so as only to require the work of two men in poling. Such rafts as these are so raised as to give the passenger a good dry seat; which is more than the passenger down-stream can count upon!

Ere embarking, there was a little difficulty with the coolies who had been engaged for us at the monastery, and who struck for double pay, which was of course refused, as the precedent would have been serious. It was somewhat unpleasant, as a crowd immediately gathered. However, when the men found that they could not extract the extra coin, they demanded a passage down the river on our raft. Their extra weight was not very desirable, so Miss Laurence suggested that she really wondered how they could wish to travel with such wicked people, as, of course, if

after this they did anything wrong, their friends would say they had learnt it from the red-bristled women! This little jest quite won the crowd, who chuckled greatly, and the men proceeded to embark quite cheerily. They did not stay with us for very long, however, as our progress was so slow that they declared they would rather walk; so they stepped ashore, but kindly assured us that they parted very good friends with us, which was satisfactory!

Our raft had been engaged for us by our friends at the monastery, whose selection was assuredly not in our favour. We found that two narrow rafts had been lashed side by side to make one of about seven feet wide—of course, the water oozed up between the two every time we made the smallest movement. We disposed the chair and our modest store of baggage so as to furnish us with seats, and the two men who formed our body-guard squatted behind, and handed us food from the provision-box. But the crusty old boatman had "chiselled" us by substituting his own small son for the second boatman to whom we were entitled, so the poling was very slow work, especially as the water is so unusually low that, although we could float in about four inches, we repeatedly stuck, and had to be dragged over the mud, an amusement in which numerous other rafts bore us company.

Fortunately the scenery is very beautiful—fine views of the river and the hills, so we were not really impatient. It was, however, late in the afternoon ere we reached the village of Kong-ke'o, where we had left the Mission house-boat. We found it moored just above the extraordinary old bridge, of which I secured a rapid sketch, greatly to the delight of a small boy, who watched its progress with breathless interest, and turning to the crowd assembled on the bank, exclaimed, "Oh! how clever these foreign women are!" The people were all most civil, thanks, as I before observed, to the presence here of an American Mission.

We started as soon as possible, and congratulated ourselves on being under cover, for a heavy rainstorm came on, which continued all the evening; the boatmen, however, worked steadily, and we reached our moorings near the north gate of this city before midnight, but deemed it expedient to sleep on board rather than disturb the sleepers. So this morning we awoke to full enjoyment of the freshness of the dawn, the night's rain having done good work in reviving the thirsty and drooping flowers. A short walk brought us back here, where my companions slipped quietly into their own house, and I into this pleasant room to dress comfortably ere the family were astir.

CHAPTER XXVI.

WALKS WITH BISHOP RUSSELL.

Temples to the Gods of Wealth and of War—The Gods of all Time—The seven hells—Buddhist nuns—Taouist nuns—A seven-dragon-head canopy—Goddess of Mercy on the serpent's head—Chinese illustrations of Scripture—The seven heavens—Fine embossed bell—A group of monasteries—Our reception—Ceremonial visiting-cards—Monastic interior—The three Buddhas—Merit of burning written paper—No prospectuses!—No posts—Stock Exchange—Carrier-pigeons!—Few newspapers—The 'Peking Gazette.'

NINGPO, *May 15th.*

THE days slip by, each marked by some (to me most memorable) walk and talk. From the bishop's long residence in this city, and keen interest in all that concerns its people, he has, of course, acquired a wonderful knowledge of all its chief attractions; and moreover, he has gained the confidence and respect of the people of every degree in so remarkable a manner that it is indeed a privilege to accompany him on his walks.

Last Monday he took me to "The Lakes," which are small pools in the midst of many temples. We explored two of these—one military, sacred to the God of War and to a deified hero, the other to the God of Wealth. The latter is always represented as a most jovial person, seated on a couch, and immensely fat, which is the Chinese ideal of prosperity. This temple is in perfect order, and is evidently in high favour. Here every house has its shrine for this most popular god, as also for the kitchen god and the god of the door. These receive daily worship from every one.

There have recently been very grand theatricals at this temple, for the amusement of the wealth-conferring god; and the bishop having occasion to pass that way last Sunday, found so vast a crowd assembled, that he thinks it cannot have numbered less than twenty thousand! Arriving on the following day, we found the place utterly deserted, save by a family of women, who were silently, as in duty bound, feeding their fat silk-worms with fresh mulberry-leaves in the rooms behind the temple.

On we went through intricate streets, crossing most picturesque canal bridges, with quaint little shrines, and totally regardless of ever-changing and most horrible odours, till we reached the temple which was the special object of our search. It is sacred to all the

gods of time—the gods of the year, the months, the days, and the hours. All are represented with long black moustaches. The central one is seated beneath the triple scarlet umbrella, richly embroidered in gold and colours, which now, as in ancient days, is the highest emblem of authority. The amount of detail in any one of these innumerable temples is wonderful—the multitude of small carved figures, the profusion of gilding and rich colour, the various objects used in the service of the temple.

One shrine (I think that of the seventh month) is almost hidden by the number of theatrical crowns hung before it, while countless strips of straw are tied to the railing. All these are votive offerings from women who come here to pray for additions to their families.

The object we had come to see was a representation of the Buddhist hells, which occupies the side court on the left hand. It is at present closed for repairs, but at the bishop's request the attendant priests kindly opened it, and we beheld that strangest of incongruities, representations of spiritual beings revealing the lath and plaster of which they are constructed, and the paint-pots to which they owe their splendour!

It is one of the most striking peculiarities of the Chinese, that in their public buildings, as in their own homes, there is no system of keeping things in repair; nowhere is the theory of the stitch in time so wholly ignored. In a mandarin's house, as in these temples, no expense is spared in the first instance, but thenceforward dirt is allowed to accumulate, and decay to work quiet destruction, unchecked for years, till the whole is in a state of ruin. Then great efforts are made to raise large funds, and the whole is thoroughly repaired, and reappears in all the glory of new carving, with much gold and gaudy colouring.

It is needless to say that the chamber of horrors in which we now found ourselves was in every respect as repulsive as might be expected from artists whose ideas of punishment are derived from the tortures commonly used in Chinese courts of in-justice. The various penalties for every conceivable form of sin are represented by different groups of figures of carved wood, coloured and gilt, supposed to be human culprits enduring every form of torture which the ingenuity of devils can devise. These realms of anguish are controlled by life-size figures of fierce judges with black beard and moustaches, and holding books of account. The hideous jubilant devils with painted faces do their bidding as willing executioners. Some of the victims are laid like the spokes of a wheel

between great flat stones with only their heads visible, and devils spearing their eyes—some are being ground in a mill—some sawn in two. All the horrors we had seen in the temples at Canton and Foo-Chow [1] are here reproduced. The whole is presided over by a large repulsive figure in white, with blood streaming from eyes and nostrils, who is ever on the watch to seize the souls of the dying. Her beauty was being enhanced by a fresh coat of paint! So far as paint can suggest it, there is no lack of material fire and devils with pitchforks, and I thought with humiliation how nearly akin to the atrocities here represented are the pictures which I have seen displayed by the largest division of the Christian Church, both here and in Japan, for the edification of its converts.

Strange to say, there is apparently no idea of representing any corresponding heaven. Nowhere in China have I seen such, except as representing a hierarchy of very ugly gods.

Our next visit was to the old Confucian temple, which stands by itself in forsaken-looking grounds overgrown with tall grass. In front is a sheet of water with a quaint bridge. The temple is in the usual condition of semi-decay, but handsome in its severe simplicity. Like all other orthodox shrines to the memory of the great sage, it contains no image of any sort, the sole object of worship being the scarlet and gold tablet which bears his name, and those which record his most honoured disciples.

At one of the temples we met a party of Buddhist nuns—funny little figures, precisely like diminutive monks. Their dress is identical—the same long grey or yellow robe, white stockings, and thick shoes like those worn by men, and their poor bare heads are equally close shaven, and somehow look more unnatural. To this process the little ten-year-old novices are partially subjected, and it is completed when, at the advanced age of sixteen, the full-blown sister takes the vows of perpetual virginity, of vegetarian diet, and strict obedience to the precepts of Buddha.

These vows are made in presence of Kwan-Yin, the Goddess of Mercy, who herself was a canonised Buddhist nun, and thenceforth the sole duty of these poor girls seems to lie in going from house to house, wherever their services are required on behalf of deceased women, for whose benefit they chant prayers to Kwan-Yin the live-long day. When this exciting work is not required, they are said to spend their dull lives in a state of utter vacuity, being literally without occupation, save that some of the younger sisters employ their leisure on silk embroidery.

[1] See pp. 214, 226.

Many endeavour to become living prayer-wheels, by repeating some form of words so many thousand times a-day. Those whom we met this morning were making a pilgrimage to many shrines, but they apparently never paused for one moment in the ceaseless reiteration of the four-syllabled charm—*O mi to Fō! O mi to Fō!*—except when, after gazing fixedly at us with great interest and evident doubt, one who apparently had not previously seen foreign ladies, thought that being in the temple we must necessarily be some sort of Poussa, and expressed her conviction that they ought to worship us. On being assured that this was quite unnecessary, she resumed her low murmur—*O mi to Fō! O mi to Fō!* Had you met this company, you would probably have taken them for a party of gibbering idiots, whereas they were only devout little nuns, accumulating stores of celestial merit by ascribing praise to Fuh, *alias* Buddha.

I am told that though Buddhist convents are very numerous, they are on a much smaller scale than the monasteries, rarely exceeding fifty or sixty inmates, while some only muster about a dozen.

It appears that Buddhism has no monopoly of the monastic system. Taouist monasteries and Taouist nunneries also abound. The latter have a decided advantage over the Buddhist nunneries, in that shaving the head is not enjoined; on the contrary, the Taouist sisters wear their long black hair fastened on the top of the head with a peculiar tortoise-shell comb of a pattern specially designed for the use of the Taouist priests. They also enjoy the privilege so dear to all girls of good family, of showing that they have had their feet crippled in childhood; whereas the Buddhist nuns, with their great masculine-looking black shoes, might as well have low-caste full-sized feet. In point of fact, though maidens of every degree do join the sisterhood (often as the only means of avoiding a distasteful marriage), the majority are recruited from the lower orders. Whether justly or unjustly, the morality of the inmates of these convents of both religions is very lightly esteemed by their countrymen.

Our first halt on the following day was at an old Buddhist temple, which interested me particularly, because on the cloud canopy of the great gilt image of Buddha are represented seven dragons' heads. This is the first indication I have seen in China suggesting any survival of that legend of the seven-headed serpent, which holds so conspicuous a place in the Buddhism of ancient India and Ceylon, where it is generally represented uprearing itself as a protecting canopy above the Buddha.



KISANNON, GODDESS OF MERCY, WITH THE YOUNG CHILD, AND WHITE LILIES (*Lotus*).

Descending from Heaven on the Celestial Dog. The Divine Bird carries the Sacred Rosary. Below are adoring spirits. —*From a Buddhist Monastery in Ningpo.*

At the back of this shrine we found, as is usual in this district, a great altar to the Goddess of Mercy, who is here represented standing on the head of a gigantic serpent, while attendants representing Chinese cherubs float around her on clouds. The young child in her arms, and the glory around her head, and the presence of the mystic bird descending from heaven, seem so singular a counterpart of the ordinary representations of the Blessed Virgin, that finding them here in Buddha's temple recalled to my memory a curious little chapel I visited in a remote district of Ceylon, where the semi-Catholicised people had erected an altar to Buddha on one side, and to the Madonna on the other!

The resemblances in detail are so extraordinary that it is scarcely credible that there has been no connection between the two, and though the matter cannot be proven, and the Chinese claim to have worshipped this goddess from remotest ages, it is said that this particular symbolism cannot be traced further back than to a period when it might have been engrafted from intercourse with the early Jesuits: especially the liturgies to Kwan-Yin—which are said so strangely to resemble the offices of the Blessed Virgin—cannot be traced back for more than four hundred years. Anyhow, it is possible that some of these analogies may have been derived from the Nestorian Christians who so early found their way to China, and who about A.D. 700 had established a flourishing mission, fully provided with bishops and archbishops.

It certainly is very amusing to see the way in which Biblical stories are transformed when illustrated by artistic Chinese Christians, and how thoroughly they are imbued with the local colouring. One such has been described to me, showing the meeting of Philip with the Ethiopian eunuch, in which Philip is represented being drawn by a Chinese coolie in a *jinriksha*—that being the Chinese ideal of a chariot. I have also seen some very quaint illustrations of the Parables and of scenes from 'The Pilgrim's Progress,' in which all the characters are Chinese men, women, and children—men with shaven brow and long pigtails, and ladies tottering on lily-feet—with fantastic buildings and bridges, singularly unlike our ideals! Imagine a Chinese "Prodigal Son" being welcomed by a gorgeous mandarin, and the "Ten Virgins," all small-footed, with hair dressed in the wings peculiar to Ningpo! So all this suggests how very easily some sample of Christian medieval art may have found its way here, and have been incorporated by all-embracing Buddhism.

Passing onward, we stopped at a picture-shop to examine a very

curious representation of the Buddhist Pantheon, showing the seven heavens with all the multitudinous gods placed in their proper gradation. Strange, indeed, it seems to find these many lords and gods incorporated with Buddhism, which in its early purity so utterly repudiated them all.

I forgot to mention that at the temple where the goddess is shown bruising the serpent's head, there is a very uncommon and picturesque four-storeyed belfry containing a splendid bronze bell, at least eight feet deep, and all round it are embossed the five hundred disciples of Buddha. They are all sitting, and to each figure is only allowed a space about four inches square, but each figure is different from all the others.

We next went to a group of great temples and monasteries just inside the South Gate. In the first we entered we saw about eighty priests and monks, some with yellow robes, some with grey, but all wearing a yellow mantle, fastened on the shoulder by a large clasp of imitation jade.

In the absence of the old abbot, we were received by a very intelligent young man, with bright clever eyes, who did the honours of the place most gracefully.

We were conducted to a very fine reception-room, with the usual handsome but very uncomfortable high arm-chairs of carved and polished blackwood, with scarlet cushions — a high small square table standing beside each. At one end of the room is a raised dais, reserved for the most honoured guests, who lounge on scarlet cushions, between which stands a small table only a few inches in height. Here we were placed, and fragrant tea in covered cups was offered to us with the usual small cakes. Our ecclesiastical entertainers sat bolt-upright on the extreme edge of the high arm-chairs, but turning their bodies towards us, which is the correct attitude to assume on the occasion—and in China special etiquette rules every action of life.

Truly wearisome to the blunt Anglo-Saxon is the necessity for conforming with the elaborate civility enjoined by Chinese etiquette. When a visitor calls, both host and guest bow till their clenched fists, closely pressed together, almost touch the earth, then rising, they lift these fists to the forehead, or else they approach one another bowing, and each shaking his own hands (*i.e.*, wagging his fists up and down). Then follows a struggle to induce the guest (who at once takes the worst seat in the room) to occupy the place of honour; and when, after much ceremonious drinking of tea and conversation in well-rounded sentences, the guest rises

to go, the host must urge him to stay, or at least to "walk slowly," if he really must take his leave. Then follow more low bows and hand-shakings.

One essential for all English officials in this country is to have enormous crimson visiting-cards, or rather slips of paper averaging ten inches by four, on which the equivalent of their name is inscribed in black Chinese characters. As there is no alphabet whereby exactly to represent sound, the only way in which a foreign name can be written is by adopting the character which represents a word with somewhat similar sound. It may happen that this word would be very ridiculous, as well as bearing only a faint resemblance to the actual name, so most persons prefer to adopt a short Chinese name which has some sort of likeness to their own, and by this they become known to their Chinese friends. These large cards are carried in a small portfolio, and in paying a visit of ceremony a servant is sent in advance to deliver this warning of your approach.

The bishop's long residence in Ningpo (since 1848) has of course made him thoroughly familiar with all the elaborate courtesies and formalities which the Chinese deem so essential, while he has so thoroughly mastered all the intricacies of their heart-breaking language, that he is even able therein to indulge the ready wit which flows so easily from his lips in his mother tongue. Consequently, whenever he gets into conversation with the people, he is always certain of a most attentive audience. On the present occasion, all the brethren came crowding round to hear his talk with the sub-abbot, evidently keenly interested. We remarked what very young men they all were, and were told that the older men retire to the monasteries in the mountains to end their days in contemplation; but the younger and more active men are kept in the cities to go about performing all the religious services required of them.

Presently the slow boom of the deep-toned gong announced the hour of worship in the Great Temple in presence of the Three Great Buddhas, whereupon the majority of the brethren regretfully departed, but the young principal remained to do honour to his guests, and took us to his own sitting-room, where some Chinese visitors were dining. He was hospitably anxious that we should do likewise, failing which, he led us to the great refectory and the kitchen, in which rice can be cooked for two thousand persons! also to the guest-chamber, specially devoted to travelling priests, of whom a considerable number were there resting. The

bishop talked to them all, and found that they came from different provinces all over the empire. Each carries a certificate which proves him to be a true priest or monk, and ensures him lodging for a reasonable period in any monastery where he may arrive. Doubtless this privilege is a good deal abused by the idlers, one of whom told us one day, with a chuckle of delight, that since he had become a monk he had no longer any occasion to work, for that any "tail-less" (*i.e.*, shaven) man could always count on food and raiment.

In a small temple (a sort of private oratory) we found several yellow-robed, shaven-headed priests endeavouring to absorb themselves in religious meditation. They were seated on hard wooden chairs set against the wall, with their legs tucked up tailor-wise, in the attitude peculiar to Buddha, like whom they were trying to lose themselves in a state of semi-unconsciousness—a religious ecstasy which might result in a trance. I fear these spiritual aspirations must have been seriously disturbed by the natural curiosity to steal a glance at such unwonted visitors!

On the walls hung curious rubbings from ancient tablets, and some fine pieces of blue china and old bronze adorned the altar. Before the images were the usual brasiers full of ashes of old incense, in which each worshipper places a newly lighted incense-stick ere commencing his worship or his meditation.

In the library some students were droning drearily over the religious classics, which are said to be as dull as they look, but which are the only literature which here finds admission.

Seeing that my attention was arrested by a large woodcut, printed at the monastic press, showing the Goddess of Mercy with the young child in her arms, sitting on clouds with the dragon under her feet, and surrounded by white water-lilies and Chinese celestial beings, one of the priests kindly presented me with a copy of it; and a very curious and interesting gift I consider it, even if indeed this peculiar symbolism is due to intercourse with the early Jesuits — a suggestion which the Chinese indignantly scout.

We looked into the Great Temple where the brethren were chanting their litanies to the "Three Precious Buddhas," or "The Pure Ones," as they are commonly called. Here as elsewhere they are represented by three gigantic gilded images exactly alike, and with an expression of calm repose. This trinity represents Buddha, Dharma, and Sanga, who together are worshipped as the one person Fō or Buddha (just as in the Hindoo faith we find triune

images of Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva, though Brahma is worshipped as supreme).

The meaning of these three impersonations is said to be—

Buddha—The intelligence in the Buddhas still to come.

Dharma—The law revealed in the writings.

Sanga—The union in the multitude of believers.

The simpler explanation is that they represent the Buddhas of the Past, the Present, and the Future.

Besides these really impressive golden gods, there are the usual series of other idols of all sorts—as diverse in material as in the characters they represent—also the usual altars with great bronze vessels for flowers, incense, and candles, and over all is the coating of dirt and the veil of dust-laden cobwebs which, except at the great New Year purification, seem so invariable an adjunct of all Chinese temples, and one so strikingly in contrast with the exquisite cleanliness of those in Japan.

Grotesque mythological stone animals guard the open courtyard, where stands the brazen furnace in which are daily burnt all papers collected in the streets on which are written or printed characters.

That furnace for the burning of all scraps of paper, points to the strange reverence for learning which characterises this people. As the Mohammedan carefully commits to the flame any paper on which the name of the Almighty might chance to be inscribed, that he may thus save it from possible profanation, so the Chinese honour all papers, that by so doing they may preserve any quotation from the writings of Confucius, or other classical authority, from being trampled under foot. It is therefore an act of merit either to go in person, or by deputy, carrying large baskets, and therein to collect every paper which chance or house-sweeping may have deposited in the streets; careful housekeepers help in this good work by saving all such fragments, and on hearing the cry of the paper-collectors, they hurry out to add their stores to his big baskets. These are then carried to the temple to be burnt, and the correct thing to do is to collect the ashes of the brasier in earthen-ware jars, in which they are carried to the nearest river and are sprinkled on its waters, that so they may be borne along to the ocean!

This is done in obedience to an edict of the great Emperor Kang-hi, who proclaimed that there is nothing more precious in heaven and earth than written characters, and who consequently forbade shopkeepers to traffic in such when disposing of waste

paper, but bade them reverently collect all fragments to be committed to the sacred flames.

It would, however, appear from a memorial to the throne, published in a recent issue of the 'Peking Gazette,' that this commandment is frequently infringed at some of the eighty establishments for the remanufacture of waste paper which exist in Peking. The memorialist prays that the proceeds of the sale of an escaped criminal's house and furniture (though they will not fetch much !) should be devoted to the purchase, at so much per lb., of such paper as bears written characters, in order to secure proper burning thereof.

We could scarcely have a better proof that Chinese households are as yet exempt from the incessant posts and showers of newspapers, letters, telegrams, and prospectuses of every object under heaven, which flood the homes of peaceful citizens in Britain ! And this is another thing which strikes one in this exceedingly conservative vast empire, as being in strangely marked contrast with the extraordinarily rapid development of such matters in the little island-empire of Japan. Whereas in the latter a dozen years have sufficed to establish postal organisation, telegraphs, and railways on a footing worthy of Europe or America, China not only continues jealously to exclude railways and telegraphs (the telegraph recently established between Peking and Shanghai, and the projected railway from Taku to Tung-Chow, being as yet the sole exceptions), but she actually has no Government institution for the transmission of posts ![1] As regards the telegraph, when its creation at Shanghai was first sanctioned, all the Chinese merchants made a league to turn out of their guilds any who should be guilty of selling by telegraph !

In Japan, the rapidly developed system of newspapers would in itself require an elaborate method of distribution ; whereas China, which esteems itself the most literary of nations (as shown in its reverence for its dreary classics concerning a remote past), is still practically without newspapers, consequently these do not call for postal consideration.

But as regards letters, a considerable proportion of the four hundred million Chinamen do occasionally exchange such—those who cannot write for themselves hiring scribes to do so. These letters are consigned to firms which have houses in all the large

[1] Since the above was written, awakening China has constructed telegraphs throughout the empire, and has now commenced to organise a national postal system.

towns, whence letters are forwarded to distant posts, where they are distributed by special agents, who generally collect the postage from the receiver. An amusing illustration of postal deficiencies was afforded when the British, having first unlocked the gates of Peking with the sword, had secured a footing within the city, and of course immediately established a regular postal communication with Shanghai and Canton. The Chinese authorities proved their confidence in the trustworthiness of the barbarians by requesting them to transmit various important State messages to officials in the far south of the empire!

But for all ordinary communications, these placid Celestials, to whom hurry appears a form of vulgar impatience, and to whom telegraphs have hitherto been an abomination, are content that they should be conveyed either by slow paddling or poling boats, or else by foot-runners, who carry their letter-bag in most primitive fashion, secured on their back by a cloth knotted across the chest. In a case of great urgency, however, such as announcing the death of an emperor, relays of express messengers have been known to accomplish their journeys at the rate of a hundred miles in twelve hours; moreover, on some of the inland rivers, long very narrow boats are employed as post-bearers. These are expected to travel seventy miles in twelve hours, and to keep up this pace day and night. They are propelled by only one man, who sits astern, and while steering with one long oar, works a second short broad oar with his feet. This is pretty hard work, so we need not wonder that in summer he finds it comfortable to dispense with his clothes!

Although the rise and fall of nations in the outer world are topics so wholly without interest to these millions, there are some subjects which call forth an eager desire for information. Foremost among these is the declaration of the list of the successful candidates for literary degrees at the great annual and triennial examinations, the publication of which is awaited with feverish anxiety not only by the competitors and their friends, but by all China. So carrier-pigeons are much employed, and travel at the rate of eighty miles in three hours.

I quote this distance as being one which is daily traversed by these messenger-birds—namely, that between Soo-Chow and Shanghai—between which two cities and that of Hankow, business quotations are continually sent to and fro by pigeons, the messages they bring regulating the daily value of the dollar in copper cash, which is a matter for heavy speculation and wild ex-

citement at the dollar auction, which represents the Chinese Stock Exchange.

Business-like Britons, who look to their daily paper for tidings of fluctuations in the money-market, may well wonder that a great mercantile nation such as this can exist virtually without newspapers, but so it is. While the native press of little ultra-progressive Japan already produces no less than 250 newspapers (all of which circulate freely among eager purchasers, thirsting for the latest news of all sorts), the vast Chinese empire produces only twenty-two periodicals, and of these only twelve are in the vernacular; nine are in English and one is in French. Even of these, the circulation is so extraordinarily small, that newspapers may fairly be considered unknown to the four hundred million inhabitants of the Celestial empire. Liberty of the press is altogether a thing not realised.

With three exceptions, all China's very limited list are published at four of the treaty ports open to foreigners. Shanghai has given birth to fifteen—Ningpo, Foo-Chow, and Amoy are answerable for the others. Of the three exceptions, two are published at Hankow, 700 miles inland, but situated on the great river Yang-tze-kiang—a waterway which, by opening communication with the seaports, has perhaps tended to introduce this wonderful innovation. *Even Canton, with its population of* 1,500,000 (so near to the British colony of Hong-Kong, where emancipated Chinamen attain to many enlarged ideas, and which publishes ten English and four Chinese papers), HAS NOT ONE PUBLICATION OF ANY SORT!!

The third exception, and the sole newspaper of the whole vast extent of Northern China, is the 'Peking Gazette,' which is beyond doubt the oldest newspaper in the world, and claims to have existed long before the Western barbarians invented printing for themselves. There seems no reason to doubt that it was in circulation in the twelfth century. Though said to be not positively official, it is under the strictest Government control, and beyond imperial edicts and petitions, contains only such morsels of information as the paternal Government sees fit to impart to its babes. It is in the form of a pamphlet, seven inches in length by four in breadth, and stitched into a yellow paper cover, which proves it to be an imperial messenger.

There are, however, three editions, one of which has a red cover, and another a white cover, and I am not sure which is which. I understand, however, that the red one (which is published every other day) contains only official information, while the white one, which appears daily, contains information on police reports and

other matters of local interest. The third edition contains the cream of the other two, in a cheaper form, for the populace. The news thus disseminated is sometimes extraordinarily puerile, and that which relates to intercourse with foreigners is apt to be amazingly mendacious. But true or false, this metropolitan oracle is despatched daily to the capital town of each province, where it is republished under strict official supervision; and woe betide the luckless publisher or printer who ventures to alter one jot or one tittle, even when he is aware of the utter falsity of the information he may be called upon to print!

This strange, stunted little gazette, which has thus survived seven centuries of dwarfed existence, is a characteristic example of many a Chinese institution, fairly commenced ere the rest of the world had emerged from barbarism, but then remaining spellbound, never developing. But already the journals printed under foreign protection have introduced the thin end of the wedge, and when once a taste for such literature is awakened, vast indeed is the field that will be thrown open to the thousands of educated Chinamen who vainly pine to find some scope for their energies, such as will be afforded in providing newspapers for the four hundred million.

CHAPTER XXVII.

ECCLESIASTICAL BARRACKS.

Capture of Ningpo by the Taipings—Ecclesiastical barracks!—Temple of the God of Thunder—Spring festival—Sacrifice of a clay ox or pasteboard buffalo—Indian gods—Vishnu and a litter of pigs—Monkey-god—"New gods for old!"

NINGPO, *May 16th.*

WE have been enjoying a pleasant stroll on the old walls, scrupulously avoiding the "Baby Towers," and resolved only to enjoy the delicious honeysuckle, jessamine, and wild roses which here and there clothe the walls in such rich profusion.

These grey ramparts, however, recall many mixed memories to the residents—memories of great danger, when Ningpo was the bone of contention between the rival parties in the great civil war. Thence was first descried the approach of "the Long-haired," as the dreaded Taipings were called, from the fact that, as the out-

ward and visible sign of throwing off the Tartar yoke, they abstained from shaving their foreheads, which is not a Chinese custom, but is done in obedience to the arbitrary decree of the conqueror.

Great were the preparations for the defence of the city—the manufacture of gunpowder, the mounting on the walls of strange devices with ropes and pulleys, whereby to pound the heads of the besiegers with wooden logs bristling with iron spikes!

Preparations were made for a long siege, but when the terrible foe actually arrived, the whole business was settled in a couple of hours! As they approached, they were received with what was intended by the city defenders to be a galling fire, but as the cannon-balls were much too small for the guns, they rolled out playfully the moment these were depressed to aim at the assailants! The latter then swam the moat, shielding their heads with boards and mattresses, which effectually broke the blows of the spiked logs; scaling-ladders were planted, and in another moment the besiegers stood triumphant on the walls, whence the affrighted guard made good their escape.

The Taipings held the city from this date (December 7, 1861) till the following May, when it was captured by the English.

A City Guard was then formed of Canton soldiers, drilled and officered by Englishmen. This force is said to have done excellent service. It is still kept up, and is officially supposed to number two hundred men, but (as is customary in China) it actually numbers only about a hundred and fifty.

Till permanent barracks could be provided, this force was temporarily quartered in a very celebrated great temple dedicated to the Thunder-god, and much to the disgust of his high priest, these free quarters have been found so convenient that it has not been thought necessary ever to find others, so the luckless priests see their flocks dispersed and their revenues lost, without receiving any manner of compensation. The people, however, still assemble here in immense crowds, on one day in each year, to pray for the preservation from lightning of their homes; but as the temple has itself been struck on more than one occasion, such guardianship is somewhat suggestive of the broken reed!

The people, however, are very considerate for the difficulties of their deities! It was in one of the minor courts of this temple that Mr Cobbold and the bishop lodged on first coming to this city, and when the rebels captured Ningpo, the old priest fled to Mr Russell's house for protection, which of course was gladly

given. But, in his kindly genial way, the bishop could not resist asking what the gods were doing that they did not protect their priest? The poor old man replied that *they had all returned to heaven in great alarm!*

One other great festival still attracts crowds to worship here in spring, at the shrine of the gods of the seasons, when a clay ox is offered, and then broken, and the worshippers scramble for the fragments, believing that each sacred atom has power to fertilise the field into which it is cast. I am told that in Southern China a pasteboard buffalo is substituted for the clay ox, and that at the spring festival it is placed on an altar, and (in company with the God of Spring) is carried in procession through the streets to the office of the prefect, where the idol receives worship. But on the following day, the municipal authorities, having placed the poor pasteboard bullock in the centre of the court, walk slowly round it, armed with rods, marking each step by striking it a severe blow. They then set it on fire, and the people rush forward and struggle for the burning fragments, believing that to secure these ensures luck for the ensuing year.

Is it not very strange here in China to find a custom so closely akin to the spring and summer festivals of Europe, where, to this day, we find places in which,[1] after vespers, the villagers dance sunwise round a sacred bonfire, and then wildly scramble for its fragments of charred wood, to be religiously treasured as a charm throughout the year?

On the strength of an invitation from Colonel Cook and Major Watson, of the City Guard, the bishop took me to inspect their temple. Surely never were there such unique barracks as these highly ecclesiastical quarters! The great image of the Thunder-god occupies the central court, all round which, without the slightest deference to the gods or their priests, are ranged cannon, all ready for action. Another worshipful group represents the Ancestor of Thunder, supported on either side by his descendants, Thunder and Lightning, the latter holding symbols. Here, too, are all the idols who rule time—the gods of the years, the months, the weeks, days, and hours.

The officers' quarters certainly have the charm of originality, for, without removing the idol shrines, they have converted various chapels into most comfortable bedrooms and sitting-rooms, wherein the images serve the purpose of decoration. Thus, a light

[1] See 'In the Hebrides,' pp. 215, 230, 231. C. F. Gordon Cumming. Chatto & Windus.

sunny dining-room, with luxurious arm-chairs and sofas, is presided over by a fine full-sized Goddess of Mercy, which in this case, strange to say, is simply an Indian Vishnu with eight arms! The lotus-throne of this transformed image rests on wheels, and, strangest of all, from beneath this throne peep out about a dozen small pigs, carved and coloured! Now, although Vishnu once came to earth in the form of a wild boar,[1] pigs in general are an abomination in the eyes of his worshippers, and I have never seen anything of this sort in India.

But such are the extraordinary conglomerations of Chinese mythology, that even the Monkey-god has a place in the Celestial Pantheon, though, so far as I am aware, the animal himself is unknown in this empire. Nevertheless he is here worshipped as "the Great Sage of the Whole Heavens." His image was pointed out to me at Canton, in the temple of the Five Genii, where it is annually arrayed in new silken raiment. Its votaries are chiefly gamblers and expectant mothers. The latter occasionally dedicate their unborn offspring to his service!

As China's chief communication with India, on matters of faith, was in the early days when Buddhist missionaries came here to spread a creed which, in its purity, was non-idolatrous, it really is strange to find that so many Indian idols should have crept into honour, even on the assumption that they are merely the attendants of Buddha.

On either side of the image of Vishnu, with the litter of little pigs, stand Chinese and Hindoo gods, and rows of large gilt statues are ranged on each side of the room. In the bath-room is a splendid shrine to the Lord of Heaven and Earth, and in another room stands a shrine with a very fine image of a goddess with a child in her arms—not the Goddess of Mercy, but one who is worshipped by women only. Her name, I think, is Kum-Fa, and she is the special goddess of babies. So, lest she should feel out of place during this prolonged military occupation of her shrine, it is partially concealed by a large mirror!

This temple is surrounded by fine old trees, and the air is fragrant with the scent of the Pride of India, a tree somewhat like the English ash, but bearing blossoms which in colour and scent greatly resemble the delicious lilac of our shrubberies. In short, as we sat to-day in these strangely transformed chapels, we thought

[1] 'In the Himalayas and on the Indian Plains,' Incarnations of Vishnu, p. 166; 'Hanuman, the Monkey-god,' p. 259. C. F. Gordon Cumming. Chatto & Windus.

the City Guardians were not likely to be in any hurry in pressing for permanent barracks!

Neither need they feel scrupulous about excluding some worshippers, for these have an abundant selection of idols of every sort and kind. Truly, a census of the gods of China would be a curious thing in statistics! And yet during the twelve years or thereabouts, during which the highly iconoclastic Taipings waged their war of extermination against all idols (and that movement extended over fifteen out of the eighteen provinces!), millions of images were destroyed, and for a while it really seemed as if there must be a perceptible decrease in idol-worship, but with the suppression of the Great Rebellion the manufacture of images as a lucrative industry revived. So, from this point of view, the principal result of that destruction has been that an innumerable host of new, cheap, and gaudy images replace those which were at least venerable from age and crumbling into natural decay.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

NOTES ON VARIOUS MATTERS.

The beautiful Fuh-Kien Temple—The first foreigners in Ningpo in cages—Numerous *pai lows*—Brutal boys—Barbarous executions—More temples—Cheap dentistry—Goddess of ironfounders—Sacred isle of Pootoo—*O mi to Fō!*—Superabundant population—Horses not required—Nor labour-saving machines—The draw-loom—Chinese compass—Many contrarieties of custom—"Good wine needs no bush"—Kite-flying.

NINGPO, *Saturday*, 17*th May*.

I REALLY think I am almost satiated with temple sight-seeing, for the supply seems inexhaustible, and though there is always some point of unusual interest which makes it seem worth while to visit each, truly their name is legion. When you come to consider that in every city throughout this vast empire there are just as many temples, and that in every temple are ranged images of multitudes of minor deities all demanding worship, the thought becomes positively bewildering.

I have several times found my way back to the beautiful Fuh-Kien Temple, which is now all adorned for the spring festival.

All round the courts are hung numerous very handsome lamps, while the interior of the temple is decked with most gorgeous embroidery. There is a magnificent new altar-cloth, a great triple umbrella of state, and a gigantic silk fan. Even the hanging lamps are all of richly embroidered silk in panels. All this week there has been a tremendous theatrical entertainment going on day and night, attended by vast crowds. Such a scene is always picturesque, and full of minor incidents worth noticing—as, for instance, the crowd of gamblers who establish themselves in the inner court, playing for cash on mats which are divided into squares, each marked with a Chinese character, either in scarlet or white.

I had wished to secure a drawing of this temple, but, under the circumstances, it was impossible, though the crowd were quite polite. (How strange it is to think that fifty years ago the only spots in China where the presence of foreigners was tolerated were Macao and the factories at Canton, and even there they could only obtain exercise by walking to and fro in front of their own houses! And in those days no foreign woman was allowed to live even in these sanctuaries! To look nearer here, it is only just forty years since the first white woman ever seen in Ningpo was carried through its streets in a cage, to be stared at by excited mobs. She was the wife of the captain of a brig that was wrecked near the mouth of the Yang-tze-Kiang, and such of the crew and passengers as reached the shore were at once captured and secured in cages, as we should secure tigers or suchlike dangerous beasts. At that same time, in 1840, during the first China war under Lord Gough, our old friend, General Philip Anstruther, was engaged on a survey near Ningpo, when he too was taken prisoner, and remained in captivity for six months, during most of which time he was kept in a cage 3 feet by 3! That cage now holds a place in the United Service Museum in London, and the irons with which he was fettered are at Airth Castle in Stirlingshire, where many a time I have looked at them with awe, though little dreaming that I too should one day find myself in these same streets of Ningpo, and find, as he did, that a ready pencil is a sure passport to the respect of these people.)

I have found a very peaceful sketching-ground near the old temple with the quaint belfry and beautiful bell (the temple where the Goddess of Mercy stands on the serpent's head). It is an unusually picturesque exterior, and I found a nice grassy bank beside a pool in which the scene lay mirrored. Though the spot

is usually very quiet, of course some idlers quickly discovered the new attraction, and a considerable crowd soon assembled, but they were very civil; and so long as the nature of the ground prevents their standing between me and my subject, their presence does not disturb me much, though it certainly adds to the fatigue.

From this point we went a long expedition to the West Gate, outside of which, on the very brink of the river, stands a large group of those curious structures called *pai-lows*, the triple arches commemorative of all manner of virtue in man, maid, or widow. I have seen many fine specimens of these placed singly all about the country, but here such a number are crowded close together, that their pictorial effect is altogether destroyed, though many are individually so exquisitely carved as to resemble lace-work in stone. The only object for this crowding that we could discover is, that this is the point at which all officials visiting Ningpo must land, and be received by the city magnates, so that the honoured dead are the more certain to be remembered.

As we passed along one of the slummy streets near the river, we met a noisy troop of boys evidently much delighted with some sport they had on hand. On coming to close quarters, we discovered that the little fiends had captured two live rats, and had dipped them in some inflammable oil, to which they had then set fire. The torture of the wretched rats was evidently deemed famous fun. I bethought me of sundry brutal boys in Britain who seem to find pleasure in the torture of their helpless fellow-creatures, but there we flatter ourselves that they soon outgrow the taste for such atrocities. Here, on the contrary, age brings no tender compassion—hence the horrid ingenuity shown in the torture of prisoners, culminating in those frightful executions reserved for the worst of criminals, who are condemned to be bound to a cross and then put to death by so many separate sword-cuts, the scale of punishment varying with the heinousness of the offence, whereby is regulated whether the body of the living criminal shall be divided into eight, twenty-four, thirty-six, seventy-two, or one hundred and twenty pieces, the cuts affecting vital organs being deferred almost to the last.

To-day we went an expedition by boat to explore that part of the town which lies near the Bridge of Boats, and here we found more and more great temples and guilds. The first we visited was the very gorgeous guild of the timber merchants. Thence we passed on to that of the dried-fruit merchants, which is a very handsome building in the style of the Fuh-Kien Temple, with the same

fine sculptured stone pillars, representing dragons and phœnixes. Here a second-rate "Sing-Song" was being acted, and a moderate crowd was looking on. We did not care to stay long, so passed on till we came to another large temple, and here also theatrical representations were going on, but these were third-rate; it seemed popular, however, for the crowd was dense. Chinese actors never take much trouble to conceal by-play, but it really was very funny here to see the actors dressing for their feminine parts in an open gallery, in full presence of all the spectators!

We next were advised to dive down a narrow passage, beside a wine-shop, which we did not much fancy exploring; however, it eventually landed us in another temple, where we found men busily manufacturing large pasteboard models of junks, all most gorgeously painted. I really did wish I could have carried off one to take back to England, but these are being prepared to take part in a great idol procession. In the open sort of market-place in front of the wine-shop, there were sundry cheap shows and fortune-tellers, each attracting crowds, and a quack dentist loudly invited all passers-by to come in and have their teeth extracted at the rate of three cash per tooth, positively without pain!

Here work and worship all go hand in hand. One of the industries of Ningpo is an iron-foundry, where cast-iron boilers are made for cooking purposes. All who work here pay devout adoration to "the Honourable Lady of the Heavenly Foundry," who was the daughter of an ironmoulder "in the days when the earth was young." Seeing her father sorely tried by difficulties in the working of his furnace, this admirable maiden somehow discovered that to make a burnt-offering of herself would ensure his success, whereupon she threw herself into the furnace, a piece of filial devotion which was so fully recognised by gods and men, that the former granted the ironmoulder extraordinary triumphs in his work, and the latter have thenceforth paid divine honour to this pattern daughter.

Amongst the various odd gods to whom we have done special homage, one of the funniest is the God of Literature, who is represented soaring on one toe. In another temple we noted rather a fine life-size group of eighteen saints with twenty-four attendants.

But I am told that if I want to see heathendom in all its glory, I must go to the Sacred Isle of Pootoo, in the Chusan Archipelago, which is to Chinese Buddhists what Iona was to our early Christians in Scotland—a centre of all sanctity. Like the unchivalrous saints of Iona, these holy brethren of Pootoo allow no women to

live on the isle; they do not, however, object to visitors landing to see the temples, of which there are about eighty, and shrines innumerable, clustered over a rocky wooded island only three miles in circumference. Many of these are in connection with large monasteries, for the isle owns two thousand inhabitants, all of whom are employed in connection with the service of the temples. They are men of the usual mixed type — some devout, some worthless, some robed in grey, and some in yellow; but here, as elsewhere in China, all-pervading dirt is the painfully prevalent feature.

The temples are dotted about in every direction, some perched on the brink of precipitous cliffs overhanging the sea — others nestle in shady dells, rich with lovely ferns and beautiful shrubs, and overshadowed by venerable camphor-trees, which attain an immense size, some being about 20 feet in girth. The island is very hilly, and what with crags, rich foliage, and fantastic buildings, it must be exceedingly picturesque. It rises to a height of 1500 feet, whence the outlook is one of ideal loveliness—a wide expanse of sea dotted with innumerable isles, several of which are 1200 feet in height. These are partly barren, partly fir-clad, with terraces of rich cultivation. Far below, the waves break in ceaseless melody on the sandy shores of the Sacred Isle.

Both the pink and lemon-coloured lotus (the special emblem of Buddha and most lovely of water-lilies) blossom luxuriantly on various quiet pools; while on rocks, bells, temples, and gateways are inscribed the words of the sacred invocation, *O mi to Fō!* which is the Chinese version of the six-syllabled charm of Thibet, *Om mani padme Houm!* both alike ascribing praise to Buddha as "The Jewel on the Lotus."[1] Here every devout worshipper of Fuh—*i.e.*, Buddha—strives in the course of his life to reiterate this formula at least three hundred thousand times, so this continual visible reminder of the words is helpful. The repetition of this simple formula is apparently an all-sufficient act of merit; but for brethren of a wider range of intellect, there are on the island extensive collections of the pearls of Chinese literature, one temple library including upwards of 11,000 volumes.[2]

[1] For full details of its application in Thibet to rocks, prayer-wheels, and terraces, see 'In the Himalayas and Indian Plains,' pp. 427-429. C. F. Gordon Cumming. Chatto & Windus.

[2] In February 1885 (at the same time that France electrified the civilised world by declaring rice carried in neutral ships to be contraband of war!), Admiral Courbet took military possession of this ecclesiastical isle, thereby intensifying the indignation of the Chinese and their anger against all foreigners. Of course such

This exceedingly interesting island lies within six hours' steam of Ningpo, and in the summer-time steamers occasionally make a trip there and back to give devout Chinamen and inquisitive foreigners an opportunity of visiting it in tantalising haste. Unfortunately there is no chance of any steamers going there at present, so I need not think about it!

Ere returning to our boat, we lingered awhile just to look at the crowds—the vast multitudes whose superabundant number makes one marvel how they can all find food. And herein, when you come to think of it, lies the solution of many Chinese puzzles. One wonders at first why there are so strangely few horses in the country (certainly, so far as I have yet seen, there are next to none either in town or country—everything is done by human strength).

But when you consider the cheapness of labour, the superabundance of men, and the difficulties of providing food for so many hungry mouths, you begin to realise that these people, who never grumble at any amount of hard work, can scarcely look with favour on a great animal which easily does the work of four men, and probably consumes the produce of as much land as would suffice to keep a whole family! Therefore it is better for the many, that those who can afford such luxury should be carried in sedan-chairs, than that they should ride. For the same reason it is better to dig canals which at once irrigate the land, and provide waterways on which men can work cargo and passage boats, than to make roads on which horses could drag carts and carriages.

This great problem of over-population—this teeming human life all craving a share in the work which provides the daily rice, sufficiently accounts for the determination of trades-unions and guilds to combine in excluding all foreign labour-saving machinery, and to work on in all departments of manufactures as their forefathers have done, with the most primitive contrivances, which give employment to the largest number of labourers.

In agricultural work, as in all varieties of weaving, paper-making, &c., the introduction of machines which would enable one man to do the work of ten in half the time, would be accounted a national calamity, in intensifying the already grievous difficulty of feeding such human swarms—to say nothing of the fact that human work is so cheap that machinery actually would not pay here. Never-

acts lead to immediate persecution of native Christians, and the above tidings were closely followed by the reported massacre of several hundred Christians at Kieou-ya-Pin, in Yunnan, and the pillage of all Christian houses in that and other districts.

theless it does seem very odd to go into a silk shop, there to buy so many yards of lovely flowered silks, at a counter alongside of the strange draw-loom where they are being woven by hand, in the most primitive fashion, with a small boy sitting up aloft above the frame, pulling up a series of cords which rearrange the warp-threads between each throw of the shuttle, thus forming the pattern.

In the course of to-day's sight-seeing we looked into one shop where several men were working at most exquisitely fine silk embroidery. The silk is stretched on a frame, and the embroiderer sits on a stool with all his silks neatly arranged beside him. We also went into a shop where ornamental ribbons are woven to wrap round ladies' poor little crippled feet, and to another to see a very large assortment of gorgeous silk braids for trimming, each with a dainty pattern all hand-woven.

Amongst other odd purchases, I have invested in an extremely ornamental Chinese mariner's compass—a quaintly pretty jewelled object, combining a miniature sun-dial and spirit-level, all in a silken case. Its chief interest lies in the odd fact that, as everything in China is made to work by contraries, the needle of the compass is made to point to the south instead of the north—I suppose this is from some regard to the good influences of the south. My collection of oddities now includes three compasses, all different, bought in different cities; but in each the needle points true to the south. I am told that, like most other things (including the use of gunpowder), the compass was invented in China long before it was known in Europe—B.C. 2634 being the date assigned to it.

It really is amusing to note in how many things Chinese customs are diametrically the reverse of ours. We shake hands with our friends; they shake their own hands, or rather wag their own clenched fists! English women cover their heads when they go out; Chinese women consider this very bad style—in fact, most objectionable; so even when they do wear head-dresses they are open on the crown. English gentlemen remove their hats in presence of honoured guests; Chinese gentlemen deem it courteous to keep the head covered.

An Englishman of the present day likes to keep his hair close cropped—a Chinaman lengthens his long plait artificially, that it may touch his heels. A young Briton rejoices in the early stages of his beard and moustaches, but a Celestial knows that not till he is grey-headed may he indulge in the growth of such decorations. But when an Englishman *does* shave, he generally (at least in

England) is his own barber; whereas no Chinaman, however poor, would dream of shaving himself. He would consider that he was thereby demeaning himself. (Of all contrarieties, what can be stranger than to see a whole race taking the greatest pride in the said long plait and shaven forehead, which are simply badges of subjection imposed on the nation only two hundred years ago by the Manchu conquerors!)

Furthermore, a young dandy of Europe considers his walking-stick an essential—in China the use of such a luxury is only permitted to aged and infirm persons. This law, which was passed in A.D. 903, replaced a far more arbitrary ancient law, which prohibited any man under fifty years of age from carrying a walking-stick, but permitted persons who had attained that age to use one when within their own grounds. This then was a privilege accorded only to the wealthy. On reaching his sixtieth year a man might walk about his own town or village stick in hand, but not till he arrived at the ripe age of fourscore was he at liberty to support himself at all times with a trusty staff!

Next to a walking-stick as the companion of an Englishman's rambles comes his dog, instead of which the Chinaman carries his caged singing-bird. To him the dog is the guardian of the house, and is expected to remain ceaselessly on watch.

In the matter of games, British children play battledore and shuttlecock with their hands—Chinese boys use their feet as the battledore, and occasionally catch the shuttlecock most expertly on their forehead. In England, when it was customary to put offenders in the stocks, it was their feet which were imprisoned—the Chinese equivalent is the *cangue*, the huge wooden collar, or rather large square board with a hole in the centre, through which is thrust the head of the criminal.

We read our books from left to right, the Chinese from right to left. We write their names on the back, and arrange our bookshelves accordingly—they write the names on the end, and lay them so that the end shall be visible. In riding we hold the bridle in the left hand—a Chinaman holds it in the right. We have our address printed on the face of a neat small visiting-card. If a Chinese visitor deems it necessary to note his address, it is inscribed on the back of the very large piece of crimson paper which does duty as a card. Our doctors are content with feeling the pulse in one wrist—a Chinaman feels both as a preliminary to feeling many more, for he recognises four hundred and one distinct pulses! We deem the right-hand side to be the position of

highest honour—the Chinaman places his most honoured guest on the left.

With us advancing years are very commonly ignored (especially by ladies), but the Chinese of both sexes glory in the age, which is the surest passport to honour, and the height of courtesy is to assure your guest that from his or her appearance you would have supposed him or her to be much older than the age stated! and this again implies a curious diversity in custom, for whereas we should scarcely deem it courteous to ask a stranger how old he or she is, it is almost the first question asked by a polite Chinaman anxious to show honour to his guest.

Then, too, in the matter of mourning, white takes the place of our sombre black, and though chief mourners wear sackcloth, all other relations of the dead wear white garments, and form a long procession walking two and two. The coffin is ornamented with bands and rosettes of white calico, the chief mourner carries a staff entwined with strips of white cotton, and white streamers are attached to the sign-board of the house of business of the dead. Hence to the uninitiated Chinaman a white flag of truce would suggest a symbol of death, while to cover a dining-table with a fair white linen table-cloth would convey to him precisely the same sensation that we should experience were a covering of black crape selected to grace a wedding-feast!

Speaking of wedding-feasts, what contrariety could be more startling than that a man should marry a woman selected for him by some one else, and should consider it a gross outrage on propriety to look upon her face until the irrevocable wedding-vows have been uttered! Hence have arisen some horrible stories of men discovering when too late that they had married hideous women afflicted with divers diseases, and even, in some instances, *lepers*. (In the latter case, however, the marriage can be annulled.) One peculiarity of a Chinese wedding-feast is that the bride and bride-groom wait upon their guests, handing them tea or other refreshments; and the bride, assuming the character of a servant, waits at the banquet provided for her husband's parents and distinguished guests.

In alluding to some of the peculiar observances in Chinese households after the birth of a small addition to the family, I mentioned the custom of hanging up a bunch of evergreens as a sign to all comers not to approach the house. The symbol acquires interest from the fact that other nations recognise this sign as conveying an invitation to all comers. Our old English pro-

verb, "Good wine needs no bush," alludes to the bunches of evergreen which, suspended from the sign-post of the hostel, invited all to enter and drink good liquor. The identical sign—generally a great ball of fir-twigs—calls the attention of the wayfarer in Japan to the rice-wine shop, where so hearty a welcome awaits him.

I almost think that to this catalogue of varying customs I might add the passion of grown-up men for kite-flying—not that Chinese boys do not glory in their kites, but that their seniors are equally keen in this pastime, which is made a medium for keen betting. The kites are made of every conceivable form, and sometimes of enormous length. Birds and beasts, butterflies and flower-baskets, wonderful fishes, monstrous centipedes and serpents, insects, full-rigged junks, fierce dragons with huge rolling eyes, and tigers' heads, are among the favourite forms; some are tailless—others are adorned with floating tassels. Some are made to sing louder than any humming-top, by having several small metallic strings affixed to the centre, and through these the breeze murmurs as they fly. Sometimes a very pretty game is played by flying one gigantic kite shaped like a hawk, while a whole flight of small kites represent a crowd of affrighted birds.

Like everything else in this country, kite-flying has its appointed season. Here it takes the place of grouse and partridge shooting, and may only be indulged in until the ninth day of the ninth moon, which I believe falls in November. Then thousands of people all over the empire go out with their kites, and make their way to the nearest hills or rising ground, where they have a day's jollification, and conclude by cutting the cords of their kites when high in mid-air. The kite acts as a sort of scapegoat, and sails away to the desert fields of air, carrying with it whatever ill-luck might else have been in store for the family which it represents! Whether a favourite kite may safely be retrieved, I fail to learn!

CHAPTER XXIX.

FROM SHANGHAI TO TIEN-TSIN.

Chefoo—Garden flowers—On the bar of the Pei-ho—The Taku Forts—Caged larks—Navigation of the Pei-ho—Pyramids of salt—Graves—Modes of irrigation—Tien-tsin—The famine.

ON BOARD THE SHUN-LEE,
May 29, 1879.

I HAVE fairly started *en route* for Peking! While I was hesitating whether I *could* face this much-abused journey, and yet was told on all hands that I could form no right judgment of China from seeing only the southern half of the empire, my way was made smooth by the arrival from England of Mr and Mrs Pirkis, who, with their two children, are returning to the British Legation at Peking. With truest kindness they invited me to join their party, and travel together; and so the difficulties have all vanished, and now I am really on my way to see the famous Temple of Heaven!

This is our second day from Shanghai. The weather is lovely, a dead calm, sea without a ripple, a good ship, a very kind captain, and pleasant companions. What more could be desired?

AGROUND ON THE BAR OFF THE
MOUTH OF THE PEI-HO,
May 31*st*.

Yesterday morning at daybreak we reached Chefoo—a pleasant and very healthy port, quite the favourite sanitary resort of Europeans whose lot is cast in China. It is also held in high honour by the Chinese, on account of some neighbouring sulphur-springs, which here (as elsewhere throughout the world) are found to be efficacious in the cure of rheumatism and cutaneous diseases. As regards the latter, I am told that various skin-diseases, including the itch, are common among those people of clean clothes but dirty habits.

The European houses at Chefoo are scattered over low rising ground and along the sea-beach, with a fine hilly background. We went ashore to see friends, who were all asleep, but very quickly came forth to welcome us, and to do the honours of gardens in which our familiar English flowers grow freely; so we returned on board enriched by gifts of mignonette, wallflowers, and blue corn-flowers.

Then we steamed round the Chefoo bluff, a bold headland of fine cliffs, and later in the day passed a picturesque group of islands as we entered the Gulf of Peh-chi-li.

We have been lying here at anchor the livelong day, having reached this spot at early dawn, when an English pilot came on board in a steam-launch, which immediately returned to Tien-tsin with the mails and despatches. We hoped to follow immediately, but the tide being exceptionally low, we could not cross the bar at the mouth of the river; and having made the attempt, we thereon stuck hard and fast; and here we must remain till 9 P.M., when the tide will float us off. Several other steamers lie near us, and a multitude of junks and fishing-craft.

Right in front of us lie the famous but dismally dull-looking Taku Forts, which have been all rebuilt and strengthened at an immense expenditure of labour. But as the road to Peking by land is not half the distance of the journey by river (and conquering armies are not particular about right of way), it is certain that in the event of future war we should never sail up the Pei-ho!

But to-day, as we have lain on the bar broiling in the sun, conversation has naturally reverted to the various events which have made the name of these forts so familiar to us all in Britain, in connection with our early efforts to force open the Celestial oyster which strove so hard to close its shell against the unwelcome intruder, especially on that calamitous 25th June 1859, when on this very bar where we are now aground, the gunboats of the British squadron lay helpless, exposed to the raking fire from the forts—a day which cost England seven officers and 464 men killed and wounded, three gunboats sunk, and many disabled.

H.B.M. CONSULATE, TIEN-TSIN,
Whitsunday.

As was expected, the tide did float us off and over the bar last night, and in the bright moonlight we steamed up and anchored just between the Taku Forts, where we lay all night. I awoke at 5 A.M. to see the sun rise red behind the principal fort, while a multitude of blue-clad coolies assembled to toil on the outworks. It was a lovely morning, and a most unexpected chorus of sweet bird-music greeted the dawn. It was the warbling of many prisoners—Tien-tsin larks, in cages within the fort—the companions and solace of the soldiers.

As some hours must elapse ere the tide could carry us further, we landed, and went to inspect the interior of the principal fort. We literally stormed the cannon's mouth, for, to avoid all danger of prohibition, we adopted the plan which in some cases has proved particularly useful in China and elsewhere—of entering first, and asking leave afterwards! In the present instance none said us nay, and so we walked all over the place. A number of soldiers were lounging about their sleeping quarters, and seemed only half awake. We found a German in charge of the signal-station, and had a talk with him; then we passed out by the main gate unchallenged, and returned to the horrible shore of thick adhesive mud—the shore on which the British Naval Brigade and marines landed in the face of the foe, not knowing that it was impassable, and were shot down wholesale. We picked up some shells in memory of that fatal day, and returned on board.

At 8 A.M., the tide having risen sufficiently, we started to steam up the Pei-ho to Tien-tsin, a distance of about thirty-five miles—but oh, what a journey! Those who have stood on the ramparts of Stirling Castle, and have noted the tortuous meanderings of the river Forth, may form some idea of the extraordinary course of this Pei-ho, the Northern river. It seems to repeat the letter S in never-ending combinations, as it winds in successive sharp curves in and out between flat mud-banks, so that, in whatever direction you look, your eye meets the great sails of junks, or possibly the funnel of a steamer, or of a steam-tug bringing up a large vessel, rising apparently from the middle of the rice-fields!

The navigation of such a river must be truly exasperating to all concerned, especially as the strong current of the stream makes accurate steering impossible, so that a large vessel is perpetually running aground. Now she sticks on a bank mid-stream, then the current carries her round, stem to shore, lying right across the river, and the sailors have to take to the boat and go ashore with hawser and towing-ropes—it is really some degrees worse than the Suez Canal, and very hard work for the crew. The difficulties, of course, increase every time we meet a junk, or have to pass one.

Sometimes we seemed to be steering straight for Peking, and the next moment we were going in exactly the opposite direction! The captain most kindly gave me artists' licence and a seat on the bridge, whence I might the better understand the lie of the land. Each winding of the river has received a distinctive nautical nickname, such as "The Everlasting Bend," "The Tomb Bend," "Double Bend," "Vegetable Bend," &c.

Certainly the province of Peh-chi-li, so far as I have yet seen it, has no beauty to charm the eye! In every direction, so far as we could see, it is all a vast alluvial plain—not so much as a pebble to represent stone all over the level land. It is a wide expanse of grey dust, and the villages are all built of mud. They are all exactly alike, and all are hideous; only some have dark-tiled roofs, and the eye rests with thankful relief where occasional gourds or pumpkins form a blessed trail of green in the poor little gardens.

Instead of the pale but fully clothed children of the south, these are really bronzed, and run about in troops quite naked, or lie basking in the warm wet mud along the edge of the river, shouting with delight as they scamper off to escape the heavy wash of the steamer's wave.

In every direction I noticed toilsome methods of irrigation by hand, and only where those are diligently practised has the thirsty earth struggled into greenness. In some places a flat wheel is turned by one or more buffaloes, generally driven by a tiny child perched like a fly on the back of one of these ugly creatures—itself the oddest little atom you can imagine, with shaven head and little or no clothing.

But the commonest mode of watering is by means of an endless chain of small bamboo buckets revolving on a great wooden wheel erected on the brink of the river. The wheel is worked like a treadmill by the feet of a Chinaman, whose large hat is in many cases his sole article of raiment! The water thus raised pours itself into a trough, and flows thence to supply the rice-fields. It is just the "Persian wheel," so familiar in Egypt and in parts of India, and is accompanied by the same intolerable noise of creaking, groaning, shrieking—all the dismal sounds that dry wood is capable of producing—a form of ear-torture which seems intensified by the stillness of the scorching atmosphere.

Another primitive mode of irrigation, here as in Egypt, is for two men to stand, one on each side of a ditch, swinging a bucket or a basket, so as to throw water from the lower to the higher level. It is weary work; but a month hence these men will see the fruits of their labour, for by June the rice and millet fields will all be green, and in September tall crops will wave over the plain which now looks so unpromising.

But the one never-failing crop of this vast plain is the crop of graves, which lie scattered here, there, and everywhere, in countless thousands. Not picturesque horse-shoe-shaped graves as at Foo-

Chow, but just the simplest form of conical mud mound—the old primeval tumulus, probably ornamented with a knob on the top of each. These are grouped in family parties, a multitude of small mounds clustering round two or three larger ones. In fact, these mud villages of the dead are very suggestive of the kraals of certain tribes.

We passed an immense number of huge pyramids of salt, condensed from sea-water. The manufacture is a Government monopoly.

Almost the only other variety in the scene are the brick-kilns, where the mud is baked into bricks for building houses of the better class. But there is nothing on which the eye rests with pleasure. Even the junks here are dull and colourless, and of an ugly form—strangely unlike the charmingly quaint native boats of Foo-Chow.

As we approached Tien-tsin—*i.e.*, "Heaven's Ford"—sixty miles from the mouth of the river, the country became greener, and we saw some small trees—chiefly apricot and peach orchards.

We reached the town about 3 P.M., when Mr Forrest, H.B.M. Consul, came on board, and most hospitably invited us all to the Consulate. I found that he was an old friend of my eldest brother, so even in this far corner I have not landed quite among strangers. After tea, Mrs Pirkis came with me (one carried in a chair, the other drawn in a *jinriksha*) to call on Mrs Lees, who, at the request of a friend in Shanghai, had most kindly made all necessary arrangements as to hiring my boat, and even lending me the necessary bedding, and starting commissariat matters. This is for the journey from here to Tung-Chow, a journey of about 135 miles, which has to be accomplished in small native boats.

I cannot say that the glimpse of Tien-tsin we had this evening tempts us to envy the Europeans whose lot is cast here. Just the actual foreign settlement on the banks of the river is pleasant enough, trees having been planted for shade all along the land, and the gardens diligently watered; but, oh! the horrors of the native town! As we passed through the dusty streets, each step of our runners stirred up clouds of dust; and when we got beyond the town, all we saw was a wide parched desert strewn with innumerable grave-mounds.

I have been hearing most terrible details of the awful famine which in the last few years has so cruelly desolated these northern provinces. Awful as were the reports which reached us in England, you can imagine how much more vividly they impress one,

when related on the spot by eyewitnesses. Though so large a part of the empire was affected, the most gruesome depths of horror were furnished by the five great provinces which form this north-eastern corner—namely, Shantung, Honan, Shensi, Shansi, and Peh-chi-li (in which last we now are).

It appears that, prior to 1875, an enormous level plain, extending inland from Tien-tsin, was famous for its fertility, but in that and previous years a succession of overwhelming floods utterly changed the face of the country, sweeping away all trace of carefully constructed irrigation works, and destroying all vegetation. Here and there the banks of the Grand Canal gave way, and the best corn districts presented the appearance of great inland lakes. After these years, when the prodigal clouds had poured out their precious rain-stores in such cruel superabundance, came long years when (in Biblical phrase) the heavens were as brass, which here means that they were pitilessly blue, and that the rain-bearing clouds wholly vanished from the skies.

Then the great plain became so burnt and hard that the attempt to cultivate it became hopeless. Vainly did the farmers sow their fields with the precious grain. Most of it never sprang up, and even where the tender green herb did appear above the hard parched soil, it was quickly shrivelled by the scorching sun, and with it the wretched people saw their only hope wither. For months they fed on seeds of wild grasses, cotton-seeds from which the oil had been expressed, roots and bark, tough stringy fibres which the strongest teeth could scarcely masticate, and which at best contained little nourishment to support even a Chinaman, most frugal of all the human family. Of course the cattle, sheep, asses, poultry, all perished—the very hares, foxes, and ground-squirrels, hitherto so numerous, died off. In their despair the people pulled up even the rushes by the roots, that nothing might be wasted. Then sweeping winds blew over the soil thus loosened, and produced grievous dust-storms—a saline dust, fatal to all vegetation.

Month after month sped on, but never a drop of rain fell to refresh the scorched earth. The priests called on all the people to fast and pray, that the Rain-god might have pity upon them (as to fasting, they could scarcely avoid that). The officials went on foot to the temples in token of great humility; and, morning, noon, and night, the starving multitudes thronged the temples, beseeching the gods to have compassion upon them. At every door a bottle of water was placed, as a silent appeal to the mercy of Tung

Wang, while some desperate men even ventured on giving the Rain-gods a lesson by carrying them out of their temples and depositing them in the scorching sun, till the poor idols were all cracked and blistered, and their paint and gilding fell off—but still no rain came. So things went on from bad to worse, and by the close of 1877 it seemed as though the lowest depths must have been reached.

As Tien-tsin was the port at which the grain-supplies from favoured provinces were landed, thence to be forwarded to the famine districts, a multitude of miserable, starved wretches crowded hither, as many as a hundred thousand persons finding shelter in improvised hovels made of mud and straw, round all the suburbs. In many of the famine villages a virulent form of typhus fever broke out, and fastening on victims already weakened to the utmost, found them such easy prey that from four to six hundred deaths in a night was no unusual occurrence.

Although the corn-sacks brought by many vessels lay piled in vast heaps all along the shore, the difficulties of transporting these inland wellnigh baffled the authorities. Wherever it was possible to use water-transport, this was of course done, and every stream and canal was crowded with grain-boats; but where land-transport was necessary, then indeed trouble began. Every cart and every animal that could be found was impressed into the service, but multitudes had already been killed for food. Mules and donkeys, oxen and camels, were all annexed as Government pack-animals, and vast caravans were started across the plains, and across mountain-ranges where the difficulties of transit were increased by the danger of attack by hill-tribes whom hunger had rendered desperate.

The idea of employing these starving millions on making or repairing the roads never seems to have occurred to the authorities, so time and strength were wasted in almost hopeless efforts to get over the ground. Carts were broken, and precious stores of grain were lost; men and beasts alike sank down to rise no more, and fell an easy prey to ravenous wolves, wild dogs, and birds of prey, so that the tracks were soon well defined by the multitude of bleaching skeletons, varied in places by a cheerful exhibition of the heads of decapitated murderers and robbers.

As to the people for whose relief these efforts were being made, the account of their sufferings is too appalling. In every direction the ground was strewn with unburied corpses, on which the once

domestic dogs subsisted, till they in their turn were caught and devoured.

While the Chinese officials did their utmost to organise systems of relief which might meet even a portion of the more pressing need, they were nobly assisted by a considerable number of foreigners, who undertook to see that the large sums subscribed in England and elsewhere were properly distributed. Thus these gentlemen were brought into personal contact with the sufferers—nor did they shrink from visiting fever-stricken districts, where some even fell victims to the pestilence. The amount of real hard self-sacrificing work they accomplished, and this almost voluntary laying down their own lives in the service of others, seems to have filled the Chinese with amazement, and, coupled with the fact that the people of England should take sufficient interest in the suffering of the Chinese to send them large gifts of money, has apparently opened up quite a new view of the English character, calling forth strong expressions of approbation from various high officials, to say nothing of the deep gratitude of many of the people.

So heart-rending was the widespread misery witnessed by those who went over the country to distribute relief, that much of their evidence was deemed too painful for publication. Utterly appalling were the sights of horror, both among the ghastly dead and the naked skeletons who still retained life enough to crawl about. Men, women, and children, once prosperous, who in the four years of famine had sold all their possessions, now in the bitter cold of winter, clothed in wretched rags, were subsisting on the sweepings of the quay or the grain-stores, where a few grains of millet were mingled with the dust; others mixed the coarse husks of corn with a soft stone reduced to powder (parents had literally to answer the children's cry for bread by giving them stone). Many strove to stay the anguish of hunger by gnawing bark of trees, or lumps of adhesive clay.

One man, with face blackened by starvation and misery, told how he alone survived from a family of sixteen. Multitudes of women and girls were sold—literally for a piece of bread—and carried off to other provinces. Pitiful mothers drowned their children, or smothered them beneath the deep snow, and then put an end to their own miseries. Suicide became so common as scarcely to call for comment. In every village a brooding silence told of the stupefied misery of those who, still living, were only awaiting death; while corpses innumerable lay in every direction, none having strength or energy to give them burial.

Most terrible of all was the fact, proved beyond all possibility of doubt, that (when the agonies of hunger had overcome all scruples) cannibalism, which at first stole in *sub rosa*, and was practised with the utmost secrecy, soon gained ground to such an extent, that at last regular butchers' shops openly trafficked in this —the only available—food. In eleven villages in one district it was proved that two-fifths of the dead had been eaten! Cannibalism being to the Chinaman every whit as repugnant as to ourselves, the wretched survivors were officially punished with the utmost rigour.

Terrible details on this subject were reported by various persons on the Famine Commission. The depraved appetite having been once awakened, soon ceased to be content with feeding on carrion, and the craving for fresh meat led to appalling murders.

On this subject Monseigneur Tagliabue, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Shansi, wrote: "*Jusqu'à présent l'on se contente de manger ceux qui étaient déjà morts, mais maintenant l'on tue aussi les vivants pour les manger. Le mari mange sa femme, les parents mangent leurs fils et leurs filles, et à leur tour, les enfants mangent leurs parents, comme l'on entend dire presque chaque jour.*" This sounds too awful to be true, but subsequent investigations proved it be so, and to have been carried to an excess far beyond what the good bishop could have conceived possible. Among those who corroborate this statement I may mention Dr Dudgeon, who is in charge of the L.M.S. Hospital at Peking. He states that such of these miserable cannibals as were detected were brought before magistrates, and condemned to be exposed in cages and left to starve to death. Others were nailed to the city walls, and some women, convicted of the same offence, were buried alive.

By January 1878 the names of upwards of eight millions of persons were entered on the books of the Relief Committee as being absolutely destitute. These were dying at the rate of a thousand a-day. In May 1878, it was calculated that five millions of the people had actually died from starvation, and, in point of fact, vast tracts of country have literally been depopulated.

CHAPTER XXX.

IN A HOUSE-BOAT ON THE PEI-HO.

Tien-tsin—A dirty, dreary town—Clay figures—Bonnie Doon!—A house-boat on the Pei-ho—Monotonous shores—Tung-Chow—Thirteen-storeyed pagoda.

ALONE IN MY WEE BOAT ON THE PEI-HO,
June 4th.

THIS is the third day of this part of the journey, which was held up to me as the chief bugbear of this expedition. To me it is a delightful time of rest. There is nothing to look at, and no one to talk to, and the repose is perfect! Certainly the friends who bade me come to Peking were wise, for this transition from Southern to Northern China is like passing from one world to another, and literally, beyond a family likeness in the people, the two countries seem to have no other resemblance.

In Canton every morsel of every street is fascinatingly picturesque and unique. The Fuh-Kien province is full of beauty both of art and nature. Shanghai certainly has no beauty, but its neighbour, Ningpo, lies within easy reach of most lovely country. Well, here, of course, I know that there is fine scenery in the mountains, when you get there, but this vast alluvial plain is in itself quite a world, and a most monotonous one. If I was literally weary of beauty before, I am getting a good change now, and actually I quite enjoy it!

On Monday we explored enough of Tien-tsin to satisfy me that I had no wish to see more of it, though it is a very important commercial city, being the port of Peking, and, moreover, a great walled town, with a population of about 950,000 persons. But though our active chair-coolies carried us over the ground very briskly, we saw nothing in our three hours of sight-seeing, under a blazing sun, to redeem the general dusty ugliness. Everything seemed alike hideous, and I have as yet seen no town to compare with this for dirt, dust, heat, and bad smells.

On all sides open sewers send up a steaming miasma, and a very large proportion of the people are terribly scarred by smallpox, which periodically rages here; and the people take no precautions against infection, unless inoculating children, and then administering a most disgusting drug as a sort of charm, can rank as such.

Most of our way lay between hot dry dull walls, which perhaps enclosed luxurious homes of rich men, but we saw only the dreary exterior, thronged by wretched beggars in every stage of poverty and disease. The whole city, as well as every village I have yet seen in the north, is built of mud, only varied by an occasional house of grey mud bricks.

The only point of relief to the eye is that here, as in the south, the bulk of the population are clothed in blue, and, moreover, here many women wear bright-coloured clothes, and look very clean and neat. Another feature is the multitude of donkeys and mules which stand in the streets ready saddled for hire, and are much patronised by the sailors of the numerous foreign ships, both commercial and warlike, which are always stationed at Tien-tsin, just to remind the Celestials that the barbarians can no longer be shut out, and also that any repetition of the Tien-tsin massacre would be unwise, and would probably result in the destruction of the town.

At the same time, the shipping includes a considerable number of Chinese gunboats; and the great arsenal here, which is entirely worked by Chinamen under supervision of English engineers, is said to turn out first-class war material, Li-Hung-Chang, the enlightened Governor-General of this province, having a most remarkable appreciation of all such foreign manufactures.

Although a Chinaman of the purest race, he won his laurels as the greatest general of the empire in crushing the Taiping rebellion (that gigantic effort of a vast body of his countrymen to throw off the hated yoke of the Manchu Tartars, and to break the spell by which that invading host of three millions has for two centuries held a population of four hundred millions in bondage!) For these unpatriotic services Li-Hung-Chang was raised to the highest dignities that could be conferred by the Tartar rulers, the office of Viceroy of Tien-tsin, guarding the approach to Peking, being perhaps the most important post in their gift.

Now he is the recognised leader of all advance in China. Thanks to his determination and energy, a telegraph is actually about to be established between Peking and Shanghai, an amazing concession from the Government which tore up the railway from Shanghai to Woosung.[1] Very soon he hopes to induce the Imperial authorities

[1] The construction of the first telegraph from Shanghai to Tien-tsin was sanctioned in fear and trembling as to what might be its effect on the occult powers of nature — the all-pervading *feng-shui*. Finding that the mysterious Dragon of Wind and Water took no notice of the perpetrators of this innovation, the Imperial Government waxed bold, and now not only is the telegraph to Peking in full work-

to sanction a railway from Taku to Peking, a still more amazing prospect, but one which, it is hoped, will prove the beginning of a great railway system, commending itself to the official mind as a secure means of conveying food to the capital, now that so many of the great inland canals of olden days have been allowed to fall away into hopeless disrepair, while rice-ships approaching by sea are found to be liable in case of war to be seized by any naval foe. When once a railway has been constructed to Peking itself, across a country so thickly strewn with graves, it will be impossible to raise superstitious objections in other parts of the empire, and the close of the century may see China as well provided with railways as in Japan, and on a scale so vast as to provide work which will revive the whole iron-trade of Britain.

Li-Hung-Chang further urges the developing of his country's mineral resources, and the working of the coal and copper mines; he is also a strong supporter of the college at Peking, where many young Chinamen now receive a thorough literary and scientific training.[1]

Here at Tien-tsin he has established a first-class dispensary, to be worked on European principles, and this he has committed to the charge of a medical missionary, though fully aware that his principal object is to instruct the patients and their friends in Christianity. This movement originated in his wife's very long and dangerous illness, when Chinese physicians saw no hope of her recovery. Then the Viceroy resolved to overcome national prejudice, and to summon foreign medical aid. This he obtained from the American Mission, and the physician who undertook the case had the satisfaction of establishing a skilled lady doctor in the palace to watch its progress. In due time Lady Li recovered; her husband set apart a portion of the finest temple in Tien-tsin for the general dispensary aforesaid, while Lady Li has at her own expense established one specially for women, placing it entirely in the hands of the medical lady who nursed her so devotedly.[2]

But as regards the narrow, dirty, densely crowded, and most unfragrant streets, I could not find a redeeming feature even in the shops, which to me are usually so tempting. All we saw were

ing order, but it has also been completed to every province in China and Corea, and branch lines are being constructed in all directions.

[1] See Note on recent progress in liberal education and the Training Colleges at Tien-tsin at the end of Chapter xxxiv.

[2] In the beginning of 1885 the list of foreign medical students in New York received a very interesting addition in the arrival of a young Chinese lady of noble birth, by name Ha-King-Eng, who hopes to minister to her suffering sisters.

dingy and unattractive, but we were told that the best are in the suburbs, far out of the town. We were amused to see men going about with locomotive stoves selling boiling water, either for replenishing teapots, or to facilitate a simple wayside wash in the approved Chinese style, with a bit of flannel wrung out.[1] It is bought by the poor who cannot afford fuel to heat their own kettles.

A special industry of this place is that of modelling little figures in clay coloured like life, to represent Chinamen of every degree, great mandarins, soldiers, sailors, scholars, merchants, boatmen, coolies, farmers, actors, and actresses. They are really excellent, but too heavy and brittle for transport.

Our boats were despatched in the forenoon, but having to thread their way up the river right through the city, through crowded shipping, great cumbersome junks, and innumerable craft of every description, their progress was necessarily slow. So it was arranged that we should remain in comfortable quarters till the afternoon, and then be carried in chairs to the furthest possible point. Of course I was sorry to miss seeing all the river life, but comfort carried the day; and then we had another run across the city, which nowise improved our previous impressions, the only fine object we saw being the pitiful ruin of the grand Roman Catholic Cathedral, which was burned in the disturbances of 1870, on the day when the thirteen French Sisters of Mercy, and a dozen other Europeans, were massacred.

We crossed a tributary of the Pei-ho which rejoices in the name of Doun-Ho, but it proved anything but a "bonnie Doon," and its banks were neither fresh nor fair—in short, I was not sorry when we reached the point where our little fleet of four boats awaited our arrival. They are regular native boats, but quite clean and nice. Mr and Mrs Pirkis have one boat, their two nice children and Chinese *amah* (*i.e.*, nurse) another; the cook and other servants follow in a kitchen-boat. Mine, being somewhat larger than the others, acts as our dining-room, so when dinner-time comes, the kitchen-boat is lashed alongside of this, the others come on board, and we have a most cheery, cosy picnic, the dishes being handed in to us as they are ready. This arrangement involves no delay; to-day, for instance, we were flying up the river before a favouring breeze, a very great boon both to ourselves and to the boatmen,

[1] Although the scanty personal ablutions of the Chinese form a remarkable contrast to the Japanese habits of much washing and singularly sociable bathing, I am told that there are baths (for men only) in every Chinese city, where luxurious persons are steamed and then refreshed with a cup of tea, at the cost of considerably less than one penny.

who have their full share of weary tracking, when they must put themselves in harness and with infinite toil tow us up against wind and stream.

Dinner is our only social meal. For breakfast and supper the commissariat-boat distributes our portions to the various boats. These are of the simplest construction, being long flat-bottomed house-boats, with windows which open at will. The crew reserve about a third of the house, astern, for their own use, while the passenger has the lion's share to the front. This is divided into two parts—the inner compartment, which occupies the centre of the boat, being a raised platform of wooden planks. On this the traveller spreads his own bedding (in my case it is that so kindly lent to me by Mrs Lees, together with a lamp and some table furnishings). I may note that, notwithstanding the great heat of the day, a blanket at night is most welcome. The said platform is about eight feet square, and is enclosed by eight panels of very artistic carved wood. It is separated by carved doors from the big dining-room, which is ten feet by eight, and allows us to stand upright with a foot to spare. This outer half is furnished with a table and chairs, so that one can read or write in perfect comfort, and only feel obliged to look out when meeting other craft which may prove interesting. Certainly there are a great many of these.

I particularly delight in some of the mandarins' boats—great clumsy-looking floating villages, with huge cumbersome sails, either white or of yellow matting, and large scarlet flags. They are very high in the stern (sometimes three storeys high) and swarm with men, women, and children, whose heads are thrust out from every port-hole to stare at me, as I do at them. These are the families of the boatmen, and live on board. But several fine large cabins, with any amount of colour and gilding, are reserved for the great man and his family. Even these boats, however, are less picturesque than those of the south.

The river itself is a shallow muddy stream, in some places barely twenty feet wide, in others broadening to perhaps a hundred feet, winding sluggishly between low banks through flat alluvial land, with never a morsel of rock or stone to vary its monotony—only clusters of dirty, dreary-looking huts of sun-dried mud.

We have passed many junks laden with rice and millet on their way to Peking; for the Grand Canal, which was specially constructed to bring the grain-tribute of the provinces to Peking,[1] enters the Pei-ho at Tien-tsin, whence the grain-junks travel by

[1] Hence its title, Yuen-liang-Ho—"Grain-tribute river."

this natural but circuitous waterway, as far as Tung-Chow, where they discharge their cargo, which is carted some distance to a canal, transferred to boats, and so carried the remaining fifteen miles to the capital.

The actual direct distance between Peking and its seaport, Tien-tsin, is about eighty miles, but the serpentine windings of the river make it a hundred and fifty, a distance which, under favourable circumstances, such as our own, is accomplished at an average rate of three miles an hour! If the river is low, it is apt to be much slower, and varied by constantly sticking in the mud!

Is not this an extraordinary mode of approaching the capital of a vast empire, representing one of the oldest civilisations of the world? a river, moreover, which is ice-bound from the end of November till the end of March, or even April, so that vessels which incautiously delay their departure must remain prisoners all those months in the grip of the frozen river. During all that time the only communication with the outer world is by riding or jolting in dreadful springless carts over so-called roads, which in wet weather are a sea of deep mud, and when sun-dried, form ruts like incipient mountain-ranges seamed with deep chasms!

The boatmen have a hard time of it, both night and day, for we never stop. Sometimes a favourable breeze fills the sails and helps us cheerily on our way. Then the crew rejoice, and curl themselves up in their corner to eat much rice, and chatter or sleep as the case may be. But the river winds so that no steady gale can avail for long, for what helped one hour is in our teeth the next, so then the men must return to their toilsome tracking, and when we stick on mud-banks they have to jump in and push and pull till they get us off again;—just imagine the discomfort of such work for men who have no change of raiment!—no wonder that many of the boatmen, who are not encumbered with passengers, prefer to leave their clothes on board, their sole working dress consisting of a large straw hat and a very short jacket!

Now we are very near the end of our voyage. It is a lovely night, almost full moon, and I quite grudge turning in, notwithstanding the beauty of the carved panels! But I must be awake early to catch a glimpse of Tung-Chow, which is the true port of Peking—the river port.

TUNG-CHOW, *June 5th.*

I have certainly fulfilled the last intention, for I awoke at 3 A.M., in time to see the moon set in great beauty, and found

that we had reached our destination, and were moored to a muddy bank, in full sight of a great pagoda thirteen storeys high. It is built of brick, but enlivened with a good deal of colour. It stands on an apparently artificial hillock near the city wall, and has four doors facing north, south, east, and west, which, strange to say, can only be reached by long ladders. It seems to be rather dilapidated, like most things in these parts.

Though it was still grey dawn when I looked out (and, moreover, really chilly), there were already many Chinamen astir busy marketing. Our saying that "He who would thrive must rise at five," would seem to them downright idleness! They are always ready for the day's work, and always go steadily about it. But for the last half-hour they have found it more interesting to muster in force along the bank and gaze at us. They know we are going to breakfast, and the sight of a foreign man and two women and two children eating with knives, forks, and spoons, and each provided with plates, cup, and saucer, instead of all sharing one great bowl of rice to be eaten with chop-sticks, is one which has not yet lost the charm of novelty.

It is now 5.30, and at 6 we are to start for Peking in the far-famed carts, which are the only carriages in the Celestial capital.

CHAPTER XXXI.

FROM TUNG-CHOW TO PEKING.

A "ride" in a Peking cart over Peking roads!—Indifference to the sun's rays—In Tung-Chow city—The imperial highway—Beggars—A funeral—Canals—Mongolian ponies—Quaint vehicles—Tribute-bearing nations—The British Legation—A Chinese palace—Gaudy colours—The London Mission.

LONDON MISSION STATION, PEKING,
June 5th.

AT last we are in the famous capital of the Celestial Empire!—the dreariest wilderness of dirt and dust that you can possibly conceive—a place in which it would surely be horrible to live, however interesting to a passing visitor, for whom all is made smooth by the kindness of residents. Much as I had heard to the disadvantage of Peking, lo! the half was not told me.



THE WALL WHICH DIVIDES THE CHINESE AND TARTAR CITIES.
PEKING.

To begin with our morning journey, in the only carriages of this metropolis—the Peking carts! O you luxurious people at home, gliding along on C-springs, over roads wellnigh as smooth as mahogany tables, I just wish you could for once experience the extraordinary variety of sensations to be obtained in a five hours' "ride" from Tung-Chow to Peking!

The cart itself is a small wooden frame without springs (for no springs could possibly exist on these roads). It is poised on two exceedingly strong heavy wheels, so large and solid as to seem out of all proportion to the size of the cart. These are closely studded all round the rim with very large-headed iron nails, and the axle projects considerably, so as to lessen the danger of upsetting. Overhead is an arched framework of wood, covered with thick blue calico, and with no opening at the back, so that, having taken your seat in the seclusion of your carriage, you are not only invisible to the world, but can only see right ahead over the shoulder of your driver, who sits on the shaft, and I suspect has rather the best post. To the passenger, the effect is just as if one were looking out from the depths of an old woman's poke-bonnet! This is a delightful way for an intelligent traveller to see a new country!!

Moreover, as it is summer, and the thermometer at 105° in the shade, the mule and driver are protected by a light screen of blue calico stretched over a wooden frame, which is fastened to the front of the cart, and is supported in front by two poles fixed to the shafts. To the inmate of this tunnel this of course is as irritating as driving through fine scenery with a carriage full of umbrellas!

One can only hope that it really is a comfort to man and beast, but certainly these people do not seem to mind exposure to the most scorching sun, and instead of protecting themselves from its direct rays by heaping on thicker head-gear, as we do, they actually throw off the covering which they wear in winter, and the majority of the crowd in the streets go about bareheaded, with their clean-shaven skulls shining like billiard-balls. Moreover, during this very hot weather a large proportion of the poor people entirely dispense with all clothing above the waist.

I am told that in hot weather the whole cart, including this calico screen, is covered with a stout sort of oil-silk, which makes it quite waterproof.

Well, by 6 A.M. we were stowed away in four of these extraordinary machines. I had the luck of a very superior cart with a glass window nearly a foot square, so I contrived to see something

of our surroundings. First we passed through Tung-Chow, which is one of the four thousand walled cities of China. The said walls are about forty-five feet in height, and are about twenty-four feet wide at the top, and thirty at the base; but this does not imply solid masonry, but only a great earth-rampart encased in an outer and inner wall of brickwork. These walls are in a most dilapidated state, and the gateways are insignificant.

In the main streets I noticed some shops with very elaborately carved and gilded facings, but the gilding and the paint are all incrusted with dirt, and my only definite impression was that of a horribly hideous city built of mud and smothered in dust. But indeed I had to devote my whole attention to holding on to the cart, so as in some measure to lessen the shocks of incessant bumping as we jerked and jolted in and out of pitfalls on the broad stone causeway, which when newly made, six hundred years ago (A.D. 1260), must have been superexcellent, the work of a master-mind. First, as a foundation, there was a roadway of earth raised to a height of six feet above the level plain. This was coated with cement, into which were sunk large, accurately fitted, perfectly smooth pavement stones of irregular size, some being nearly nine feet long by two in width, and this stone causeway, twenty-five feet wide, was the imperial highway to, and all round, the capital.

Now it is more execrable than anything you can conceive. The worst cart-road in Britain could convey no idea of this approach to the metropolis, or of the condition of even the principal streets! The stone slabs are broken or tilted over, the road is all worn into deep ruts like chasms, and holes from one to two feet in depth, in and out of which the driver guides the heavy wooden wheels of the springless cart, the chief marvel being how the mules escape broken legs a hundred times a-day! In many places the road degenerates into a mere track of deep dust, which, in winter or rainy weather, must mean deep mire.

As, mercifully for us, the country is not flooded at present (very much the contrary), we were able to get over a considerable part of the seventeen miles by driving alongside of the road; and, all things considered, the dust was not quite so bad as it might have been—as, for instance, it was two days ago, when General and Mrs U. S. Grant arrived, and were received and escorted to Peking by civil and military authorities—an honour which wellnigh resulted in suffocation!

As regards scenery, we were traversing a dead-level plain thickly

strewn with conical grave-mounds, and at intervals passed through mud villages with open-air eating-shops, where carters and other wayfarers halted for refreshments and watered their thirsty animals. All along the cheerless road a multitude of miserable, starved-looking beggars and naked children lay grovelling in the dust, kneeling with their foreheads on the earth to crave small coin; and it is pitiful to see the gratitude with which they receive coin so infinitesimal in value that you feel ashamed to offer it. But though I certainly have never seen so many beggars anywhere else, I am told that these are as nothing compared to those which literally lined this road last year during the famine.

The most horrid incident of the day was meeting the funeral of a man who had been dead about two months. The great heavy wooden coffin had not been properly closed, consequently we were nearly poisoned for half an hour afterwards by the appalling stench which floated along the track in his wake. But neither the funeral party nor the bystanders seemed even aware of anything noxious. These people certainly can have no sense of smell; that is proved at every turn.

Every now and again we marked the approach of an unusually dense dust-cloud, through which, as it swept towards us, we could discern a party of men riding donkeys full tilt, and sitting well back, after the manner of experienced English donkey-boys. They wear large straw hats lined with dark blue of the same colour as their clothes, a good relief to the dust-colour all round. Sometimes it was a slow-moving cloud, and a musical tinkle of bells told of the approach of silent-footed camels. We met several long strings of these, laden with firewood, coal, tea, and limestone brought from the mountains. They are Mongolians, and apparently in a most mangy condition, with all their furry hair hanging in loose rags, leaving the poor beasts half naked. But as they come from far north, and suffer terribly in this great heat, perhaps they are glad to be rid of their winter greatcoats!

We also met a large drove of Mongolian ponies, escorted by their flat-faced countrymen, whose fur caps and unshaven heads look strange now that I have grown so accustomed to bald foreheads and pigtails. Here there are almost as many faces of the Tartar type as of the Chinese, but these Mongol Tartars differ from the Manchu Tartars almost as much as from the Chinamen.

As for the ponies, they are fine sturdy little beasts, said to be very hardy; but the animals most in favour here are mules, which are excellent. I saw several carts coming in from the country

drawn by two mules driven tandem with rope-reins, and I am told that they will travel on an average thirty miles a-day over the roughest tracks, up and down hill through heavy sand, or over water-worn boulders! No wonder that carts have to be constructed without springs!

Never before have I imagined the existence of so many varieties of queer one-wheeled barrows and two-wheeled carts, and such extraordinary combinations of animals in wonderful rope-harness and rope-traces. The unequal yoking of ox and ass, forbidden by the Levitical law, is here quite the correct thing, and the man who owns an ox, a mule, and an ass, harnesses them all to his cart, and he and his wife and family push behind, or attempt to steer the wheels clear of the ruts. I am told that sometimes one may even see a dog yoked abreast with a pony and an ass, the three being harnessed as leaders to a two-wheeled travelling-carriage, while a saddled ox strides between the shafts!

I think the quaintest of all the odd vehicles we saw to-day was a huge wheelbarrow with only one wheel in the middle. It carried four enormous canvas bottles cased with wicker and full of oil (some of these great oil-baskets are merely lined with paper). Four men in blue clothes, with pigtails and wide straw hats, pushed and pulled, assisted by two donkeys, while a solitary mule led the way, far in front. Then there were any number of heavy stone-carts, drawn by two donkeys in the shafts, three mules far ahead, and a squadron of coolies in big straw hats pushing with might and main, and shouting a sort of rhythmical chorus.

As I was suffering from bruised bones, I especially admired an ingeniously contrived litter constructed with shafts both fore and aft, which was thus carried by two mules; evidently its inmate had realised the anguish of jolting upon wheels over a road like the bed of a river!

But here as elsewhere use must be second nature, for my kindly simple carter, who certainly was guileless of all intentional sarcasm, repeatedly turned to address me in a sentence which I found expressed a hope that the foreign lady was "enjoying her ride!!"

After four hours of this purgatorial progress, just after a spell of extra-terrific bumping, the driver called my attention to something ahead, and there, faintly looming through the dust-clouds, I discerned the crenelated walls and buttresses of a mighty citadel and a grand gateway tower, and I knew that at last we were drawing near to the far-famed city; and soon afterward we reached the huge gateway, and I realised that, however neglected and

dilapidated most things here may be, this approach at least is truly imposing. I cannot, however, say as much for the interior, for no sooner have you passed through the massive double tower (which is impressive from its very size, and raises great expectations of the fine city to be seen within) than you realise that nothing of the sort exists, and that the Peking of reality is nothing more than an overgrown straggling village of one-storeyed houses, very dirty and very "disjaskit," as we say in the north. Wherever you turn, in every direction there is the same general appearance of neglect and decay—unswept streets, stagnant sewers, dirty crowds, evil odours. If any architectural beauty does exist, it must be concealed within some of the numerous dull dead walls which enclose so many of the lanes along which we have driven to-day.

From the entrance to the city, about an hour's jolting brought us to the British Legation, a fine old palace (of the bungalow type), once an imperial residence, which about a hundred and sixty years ago was bestowed by the Emperor Kang-hsi on one of his thirty-three sons, whose descendants bear a title equivalent to Dukes of Leang, and their palace is the Leang-koong-foo. This palace, and that of the Duke of Tsin, the Tsin-koong-foo, happened to lie so remarkably near to the quarters assigned to the "Tribute-bearing Nations," that it at once occurred to the authorities that if the foreign Legations could be here established, it would appear to the ignorant public as if these great nations were simply new vassals of the Celestial Empire.

So the Leang-koong-foo was made over to Britain in perpetuity at an annual rent of fifteen hundred taels (= £500), and has come to be known as the Ta-Ying-koo-foo, or Great-England-Country-Palace, Yinghili being the nearest approach to "England" that Chinese pronunciation can manage. The Tsin-koong-foo was in like manner assigned to France, and sites for the Russian, Prussian, and American embassies were eventually found in the same quarter, so that while the Chinese authorities thus made the best of necessity, the foreigners have the great advantage of being near together, and forming a pleasant little society of their own—a privilege in this horrid land of exile, which fully compensates for being apparently classed as tribute-bearers!

And truly the necessity of admitting barbarians to dwell within this jealously guarded city must have been a bitter pill to the Chinese authorities. Do you remember the accounts of how, in the year 1859, only twelve years before these embassies were

ceded, Mr Ward, the American envoy, was conveyed to Peking? He had ascended one of the branches of the Pei-ho as far as the port of Ning-Ho-Fou in an American corvette. Arrived there, he and the members of the Legation were duly received by a great mandarin, and escorted to the raft which was to convey them to the gate of the capital. On the raft was placed a travelling chamber, fitted up with all needful comfort, but quite closed on all sides, to prevent them from seeing the country. Air was admitted from above. In this box they were conveyed up the canals to the gates of Peking, when the box was placed on a large truck drawn by oxen, and thus the Minister of the United States and his party were conveyed into the courtyard of the large house assigned for the use of the embassy. Here they were kept in honourable captivity, awaiting the hour when it should please the Celestial Emperor to grant them an audience; after which they were removed in the same manner as they had arrived, without being allowed one glimpse of the famous city! Even the Peking cart, with all its disadvantages, is a decided improvement on Mr Ward's travelling-case!

The grounds of the British Legation, which cover about three acres, are enclosed by a high wall, according to Chinese ideas of seclusion, and greatly to the comfort of the inmates. Part of this is laid out as a garden, and the buildings are in separate blocks and courts. The state-rooms are distinguished by being roofed with green glazed tiles. They are supported by heavy wooden columns, and the windows and doors are panelled with lattice-work of carved wood. The whole is considered a good specimen of Chinese official architecture, and it has recently been restored both inside and outside at considerable cost of gaudy paint and gold, in the Chinese style, of very intricate lines and patterns of the very crudest and most uncompromising colours—pure scarlet pillars, &c., jarring with the brightest emerald green and Albert-blue lavishly laid on. To eyes that have recently rejoiced in the subdued crimsons and green-*ish*, blue-*ish* tones, and soft pearly greys, and delicate touches of gold of harmonious Japanese decorations, there is a fascination of positive pain in these screaming colours.

Up to this moment I had been in some anxiety regarding my destination on reaching Peking, where travellers are as yet so scarce, that nothing of the nature of a hotel for foreigners exists, consequently the new-comer is wholly dependent on the hospitality of the residents. It was therefore with much relief and great pleasure that I found a most kind letter from Dr and Mrs Dudgeon, of the

London Medical Mission, awaiting me at the Legation, and inviting me to their home (the house of all others which is to me the most attractive, as the centre of many special interests). I am indebted for this introduction to the same kind friend who provided so well for my comfort on the river voyage, and whose thoughtful care had extended to writing beforehand to commend a stranger, then unknown even to herself, to the kindness of her friends in the capital. This truly is most genuine hospitality.

So, after a halt at the Legation, my baggage and I were once more stowed in the depths of the blue-covered cart, which carried me across the Tartar city through blinding dust-clouds, till I reached this most interesting spot—once a Chinese home adjoining a heathen temple, now the chief centre of Christian work in this city—the Temple of the God of Fire being now the hospital wherein many thousand sufferers have been healed of divers diseases, and have first learnt something of Christian love.

Here the kindest of welcomes very quickly made me feel at home with all the party, which I am delighted to find includes the Rev. J. Edkins, D.D., who is not only a noted Chinese scholar, but also the great authority on all matters of archæological interest in this place. It was his account of the worship conducted by the Imperial High Priest at the Temple of Heaven, combined with Mr Simpson's pictures and descriptions of the same, which inspired me with so great a desire to see the place with my own eyes.[1]

This is by no means an easy matter, as the officials are jealous of admitting foreigners; but as it has been done before, and is one of my chief reasons for coming here, I need scarcely say that I have every intention of accomplishing it, and if any one in Peking can help me, it is Dr Edkins. So finding that he is disengaged to-morrow morning, and knowing that I shall enjoy nothing else till I have seen this, I have persuaded him to start with me at daybreak to try our luck.

[1] 'Religion in China,' by Joseph Edkins, D.D. (Trübner & Co., London); and 'Meeting the Sun,' by William Simpson, F.R.G.S. (Longmans, Green, & Co.)

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE TEMPLE OF HEAVEN.

Advantage of early rising!—A lucky day—General plan of Peking—the Emperor's palace—Special temple where the Emperor acts as High Priest—The Temple of Heaven—Fortune favours the brave!—The Hall of Fasting—The copper image—The triple blue-roofed temple on the North Altar—The Imperial tablets—The six stone boulders—The cypress-grove—The green porcelain furnace—The South Altar—The Imperial worship—The Cup of Blessing—Burning the banquet—Reading the list of criminals—Symbolism—Multiples of three and nine—Temple of the Earth—Offerings buried—Temple of Land and Grain—Temple of Agriculture—God of Medicine—Two funerals.

London Mission Station,
June 6th.

This chief aim and end of my pilgrimage to Peking has been most satisfactorily accomplished, thanks in great measure to the train of good fortune which led to my meeting Dr Edkins so soon after my arrival, and to the happy inspiration which made me so earnestly claim his escort for the very next morning!

It appears that General Grant and his party had also decided on visiting the Heavenly Temple this morning, and the American Minister had contrived to stir up the Celestial officials to authorise their visit, and even to escort them thither. But as, of course, such a concession could not be made without some proviso, just to keep up the tradition of mystery and difficulty of access, it was stipulated that no ladies should accompany the General, consequently Mrs Grant, much to her disgust, had to stay at the Legation!

But the attendants in charge of this jealously guarded spot knew only that on this day many barbarians were to be admitted to the sacred precincts, so when we reached the gate about three hours before the American party, we were admitted without any question or difficulty whatever, and were able to go leisurely over every corner of the grounds and sacred buildings, concerning which, and all ceremonies connected with them, Dr Edkins is a mine of information.

When the subject was first mooted last night, several of the home party resolved to share the adventure, and face whatever difficulties it might involve in the way of scrambling over dilapi-

dated walls, and shirking or bribing officials; for truly of this terrestrial heaven it may be said that it suffereth violence, for few except the violent who take it by force ever enter within its gates. So carts were ordered to be ready at peep of day, and we were all astir soon after 3 A.M. The early dawn was most lovely, clear and comparatively cool—*i.e.*, the thermometer fell to about 80° from the noonday temperature of 106° in the shade. I am told it sometimes rises to 113°, when the very birds sit gasping.

To make you understand this morning's expedition, I must try to sketch a bird's-eye view of this great city, which covers a space of about sixteen square miles. To begin with, the Tartar city and Chinese city are totally distinct—the former being a great square city, and the latter forming a long oblong immediately to the south. Each city is enclosed by a mighty wall, but the south wall of the Tartar city forms the north wall of the Chinese city. The two together form twenty-five miles of this masonry for giants! The Tartar city has nine gates—two to the north, two to the east, two to the west, three to the south. These three last consequently open into the Chinese town, which has seven gates of its own besides—not gates such as we understand in Britain, but stupendous masses of masonry, like some fine old Border keep greatly magnified.

Within the Tartar city lies another great walled square. This is the Imperial city, in the heart of which (as a jewel in its setting) another great square district is enclosed, within very high pale-pink walls.

This inner space is the Forbidden City—in other words, the private grounds around the palace, wherein, guarded even from the reverential gaze of his people, dwells the Imperial Son of Heaven. To this palace the city owes its name, Pe-king (or, as the Chinese pronounce it, Pai-ching), meaning literally "North Palace," just as Nan-king was the southern palace.

Within these sacred precincts no foreigners have ever been allowed to set foot, though they may gaze from beyond a wide canal at the very ornamental archways, and the double and triple curved roofs of many buildings, rising above the masses of cool dark foliage. Every one of these archways and buildings is roofed with brilliant golden-yellow tiles of porcelain, which are positively dazzling in the sunlight. The tall buildings on the opposite side of the canal are similarly roofed, denoting that they too are specially Imperial property (yellow emphatically being the Imperial colour, the use of which is prohibited to all save Buddhist priests, who not only wear the yellow robe, but are privileged to roof their

temples with the yellow tiles, stamped with the Imperial dragon. I speak especially of the Lama temples).

Within the Tartar city, immediately to the south of the Imperial city, lies the district assigned to the tributary nations and foreign Legations, while this London Mission Station lies nearer to the south-east gate. Various temples of the three religions which we have met all over China—Buddhist, Taouist, and Confucian—and of their various subordinate sects, are scattered about both cities, each enclosed by its own high wall, so as effectually to prevent its adding any feature to the appearance of the city.

But here at Peking there are several temples, each unique of its kind, where the Emperor, assuming the character of High Priest, himself offers to the Rulers of the Universe the worship of his people.

Of these exceptional temples the most important are the Temple of Heaven and the Temple of Agriculture, each occupying a large walled enclosure within the walls of the Chinese city. The Temple, or rather Altar to the Earth, lies on the north side of the Tartar city; that to the Sun also lies outside the walls, in a shady grove on the north-east side of the Tartar city near the Gate of the Rising Sun—and that of the Moon outside its Western Gate. At each of these, and also at the Imperial Temple of Ancestors, the Emperor in person, attended by all his nobles, must at stated seasons offer most solemn sacrifice and prayer on behalf of his people; and truly it would be difficult to conceive any national act of worship more imposing than the whole ceremonial attending those Imperial ministrations, which seem to recall the patriarchal times of Melchizedek, King and High Priest.

This is most especially true of the services at the Temple of Heaven, where, prostrate on an elevated and roofless platform of pure white marble, the Emperor kneels in lowliest adoration of Shang-te, the Supreme Lord of Heaven—his courtiers and nobles kneeling reverently around, on lower terraces of the same platform (or rather marble mound), an open-air temple whose only roof is the starry canopy of the midnight heaven.

In none of these temples is there any image to suggest idolatry, the celestial and terrestrial powers being alike represented only by simple wooden tablets, placed upright in stands of carved and gilded wood, precisely similar to those which bear the names of the honoured dead in every ancestral hall throughout the empire. In fact, the one "heathenish" touch in this very grand worship of the Lord of Heaven, is that the tablets of the deceased Emperors are

ranged on either side of the tablet symbolising Shang-te the Supreme, and that to them is rendered homage and sacrifice only secondary to his own.

But the true meaning of this seems to be, that the offerings are not intended as atonements for sin, but as a spiritual banquet to which it is necessary to invite other guests to do honour to the principal guest; and as the deceased Emperors are held in such reverence as to rank above all other spirits in the hierarchy of heaven, it follows that they are the only guests who can be invited to share his banquet.[1]

The reigning Emperor, while thus adoring the unseen Powers with lowliest humility, nevertheless fills the position of one who is the earthly vicegerent of Shang-te, and who at the moment of death will mount the Great Dragon which will bear him to take his place in that worshipful company.

Well, to return to our expedition this lovely early morning. Our route from here lay in a perfectly straight line along a broad street (so wide that an extemporary rag-fair of booths occupies the centre all the way !) till we came to the great Ha-ta-mun, the south-east gate, and so passed into the Chinese city, and through densely crowded streets, till we reached such countrified suburbs that it was difficult to believe that we were still within the walls of the city. When we had almost reached the central South Gate, we came to a large space with great walled enclosures on either side. That to the west is the park of the Sian-nun-tian, known to foreigners as the Temple of Agriculture. That to the east is the park of Tian-tian, or the Temple of Heaven. These high red walls are roofed with yellow china tiles, each of which ends in a circular tablet bearing the Imperial dragon.

There is nothing imposing about the approach—rather the contrary; we halted at a dilapidated gateway, where, as I before said, instead of slamming the door in our faces and bargaining for much coin (which is the usual manner of receiving visitors at this Celestial Temple), the attendants passed us in with the utmost courtesy, and we found ourselves in a large grassy park, shaded by fine trees. This is a walled park, three miles in circumference, forming the pleasant pastures wherein the bullocks, sheep, and other animals destined for sacrifice graze till their last hour draws near, without a thought of the slaughter-house which lies hidden in a grove at

[1] I have already had occasion to allude to this curious subject, with reference to Ancestral Worship and to the Imperial ministrations in the Temple of Ancestors. See pp. 200, 201.

the north-east corner. I found it difficult to realise that this cool green shady park was actually within the walls of a city where human beings cluster in throngs as dense as bees on a swarming day!

The first building we came to is "The Hall of Fasting," in which the Emperor spends some hours in silence and solitude, in preparation of spirit, ere assuming his office as High Priest. Besides "occasional services" marking such events as the accession of a new Emperor, or some extraordinary national event, there are three set days in the year when these usually deserted grounds are thronged by all the nobles of the land—namely, the summer and winter solstice (when the great religious solemnities are performed at midnight at the roofless Southern Altar), and the festival which marks the beginning of spring, where the sacrifices are offered at the earliest glimmer of dawn at the Northern Altar—on which is erected a perfectly circular wooden temple, in three storeys, forming a sort of telescopic pagoda, of which each storey is smaller than the one below it, and is roofed with the loveliest bright blue encaustic tiles, the topmost roof rising to a small peak. This temple is called the Che-nien-tien, "Temple of prayers for a fruitful year," which name is inscribed on a large tablet beneath the eaves of the topmost roof.

The name of North and South Altar is here applied to two immense circular platforms or hillocks formed by three terraces of beautifully sculptured white marble, piled one above the other. The Southern Altar is distinguished as the Yuen-kew or round hillock.

On each occasion the Emperor leaves his palace at sunset in a car drawn by an elephant (the only elephant of whose existence I have heard in these parts),[1] and escorted by a train of about two thousand courtiers and attendants. A perfectly straight street runs from his palace to the gate of the temple, passing through the Chien-Mun, which is the central South Gate of the Tartar city, never

[1] Elephants are imported solely to grace certain State festivals. The Emperor Hien-fung owned thirty-eight elephants, but apparently the very variable climate does not suit them, for at the time of his death in 1861 only one survived, and it became necessary to import new ones. Of these, only two now survive. A third died two years ago, and his body was thrown into the city moat, there to putrefy at leisure beneath the midsummer sun, poisoning the atmosphere for weeks! Pieces of its thick hide were preserved for sale to persons visiting the Imperial elephant stables. These are situated near the South Wall of the Tartar city, and have accommodation for forty-eight elephants, each in a separate stable, solidly built with brick walls six feet thick. These cover a large extent of ground, where the elephants (when there are any!) are exercised. The whole is, however, in a very neglected condition.

opened on any other occasion save these, or for any person except the Emperor or one of the Imperial tablets!

(For that matter, it is not only in Peking that there is an objection to opening the South Gate of a city. In times of drought especially, the South Gate is kept closed, because the Chinese suppose that as the sun's rays reach them from the south, so may the Fire God enter thence, and especially in the burning summer may produce a conflagration which, in a town chiefly built of wood, would be a matter too serious to risk!)

On reaching the temple grounds, the Emperor proceeds first to inspect all the animals for sacrifice, which are stabled in the outer park. He then retires to the Penitential Hall, where he is left alone, and to assist his meditations a small copper image of a Taouist priest, which had been carried before him in the procession, is placed on his right hand. The image bears in one hand a tablet on which is inscribed "Fast for three days," while the other hand, with three fingers raised to the lips, inculcates silence, the idea being that unless the mind is filled with holy thoughts the righteous spirits will not attend the sacrifice. This image, which is only fifteen inches in height, was cast in the year A.D. 1380 by order of Choo-tai-tsoo, the founder of the Ming dynasty, in order to remind him of the duty of solemn meditation as a preparation for his priestly duties.

When the appointed hour arrives, the Emperor proceeds to a robing tent, where he washes his hands ceremonially, and assumes the blue sacrificial robes, which denote his office as High Priest of Heaven. Then escorted by 234 musicians, also robed in Heaven's blue, and an equal number of dancers, who perform slow and solemn religious dances, and followed by all his princes and nobles, the Imperial High Priest passes on to the altars of sacrifice.

To these we now made our way, and presently came to another wall completely enclosing all the sacred buildings. Here also we found an open gate, and passed in unchidden. We were now on green turf, and before us towered the triple roof of the three-storeyed temple on the great Northern Altar—three roofs rising one above the other pyramidally, and covered with brilliant Albert-blue tiles, dazzlingly bright in the early sunlight. But this also is enclosed by a square wall coloured pale pink, and roofed with tiles of a lovely aquamarine colour—about the tint of a thrush's egg.

Here again the door was open and we passed in, and found our-

selves on a square platform at the base of the great circular triple platform of white marble, on which stands the aforesaid temple. Eight triple flights of nine steps each lead to the upper platform. These somehow represent a mystic figure known as the Eight Diagrams, the symbolism of which none but a born Chinaman can fully grasp!

Our crowning point of good fortune lay in the fact that this temple itself, which is usually so rigidly closed as to defy all bribery, to-day opened wide all its portals, so we were able to examine the interior at our leisure. There is no ceiling, so you look right up into the pointed roof, the interior of which is richly gilded. The highest roof is supported by four very tall round pillars, the second roof rests on twelve medium columns, and the lowest roof on twelve shorter ones—all of wood, and elaborately coloured and gilded. On the north side, facing the door, is an altar, on which stands the simple wooden tablet inscribed with the name of Shang-te, the Supreme Lord, and Master of Heaven and Earth and all things. On either side are ranged shrines for the tablets of the eight deceased Emperors, each upheld by a handsomely carved wooden stand, representing dragons. Except that these are coloured scarlet and gold, there is nothing to relieve the severe simplicity of this interior, which is precisely on the principle of all ancestral temples.

On the same principle (the *real*, *very plain* ancestral tablets being kept in an inner wall, and show ones in the great hall of family ancestral temples[1]), I am told that the *real* tablets of Shang-te and the Emperors are kept in the most sacred seclusion in a smaller square building called "Imperial Heaven's Temple," lying immediately at the back of this triple-roofed temple, whence they are only brought forth at the great festivals.

Standing on the marble platform at the door of the temple (on the very spot where the Emperor kneels alone when worship is here offered), we looked due south along the paved road leading to the Great South Altar, which lies at a considerable distance.

Halfway between the two there is another circular tower, with a splendid single-peaked roof of the same intensely rich blue tiles. *In this temple are stored a duplicate set of the tablets of Shang-te and of the Emperors.* These are used whenever sacrifice is offered on the South Altar, whereas those we saw in the triple-roofed temple only appear when the service is on the North Altar. This tablet temple is surrounded by a circular wall of a pink salmon

[1] As described at p. 294.

colour, roofed with lovely pale-green dragon tiles, and its three great gateways have handsome curved roofs of the brightest yellow tiles edged with a row of the brightest green dragon tiles. All this colouring has special symbolic signification. Blue roofs indicate buildings for the worship of Shang-te only; yellow or brown have reference to earth; while green, combining both, is deemed suitable for such buildings as the Hall of Fasting, and the building in which the musicians practise their choral anthems. Here, of course, the distinctive colour is celestial azure. Even the sunlight acquires a blue tint as it strikes through an arrangement of blue glass rods, which form a substitute for stained-glass windows. The carved wooden cases wherein are stored sacred tablets also have a covering of blue cloth.

At a considerable distance beyond the central blue-roofed building lies the great triple terrace of white marble, which is the South Altar, generally distinguished as "The Altar of Heaven," the approach to which is beautified by two sets of three white marble *pai-lows*—*i.e.*, the square-shaped triumphal arch facing each of the four sets of stairs.

Before proceeding thither we turned aside into the dense grove of very large old cypress-trees which form a broad belt of dark-green foliage on either side of this long roadway, and of these grand altars. They are noble old trees, and their cool deep shade was doubly delightful, as the slanting rays of the morning sun were already striking with extreme heat.

The objects of special interest which we sought in the depths of this arbor-vitæ grove were what to us appeared to be seven great unhewn stone boulders, which, however, are said to be meteoric stones, and to have been venerated from prehistoric times, as the heaven-sent guardians of the Imperial throne. (Strange how widespread are the survivals of primitive stone-worship! Britain, too, has her king-making stone, which is securely housed beneath the Coronation Chair in her Temple of Heaven, commonly called Westminster Abbey! a rude water-worn stone which holds its time-honoured place in the stateliest ceremonial of the British Empire!)

A little further we came to a spring of deliciously cold water; then continuing our walk through grassy glades, beneath the old cypresses and laburnum-trees, we passed a store-house in which are kept the musical instruments, the banners, and the sacred triple umbrellas which figure in the State ceremonies. Then finding a gateway which admitted us within another square pink wall,

roofed with yellow and edged with green tiles, we found ourselves standing at the base of the magnificent white marble circular triple platforms, the summit of which is the Altar of Heaven, and here it is that the grand midnight services are held at midsummer and midwinter.

Here (as at the great North Altar), in a corner of the outer square wall at the base of the circular terraces, are the furnace of green porcelain (9 feet high by 7 wide), and eight great cup-shaped braziers of ornamental cast iron. These are the altars of burnt-offering in which the various sacrifices are burnt; the green porcelain furnace consuming the bullock, the silks, the incense, and other things offered to Shang-te, while the eight iron brasiers consume the sacrifices to deceased Emperors. The hair and skins of the beasts offered are buried in pits a little further off. The animals sacrificed may be of all sorts which are used for human food, which in China is a tolerably comprehensive list, including, besides sheep and cattle, hares, deer, and pigs. In ancient days horses were included—a survival of the primitive great horse-sacrifice; but they are now omitted, not being legitimate food for the banquet.

Here four triple flights of nine steps each, instead of eight as at the North Altar, lead to the summit. Each terrace is surrounded by a very handsome balustrade, and by great marble knobs sculptured to suggest clouds and other emblems of heaven. On the lower terrace these are all curly clouds. On the middle terrace there are phœnixes (the celestial birds which, with the dragon, form the Imperial heraldic bearings), and the dragon himself appears in multiplied form round the upper terrace.

Ascending thither we found ourselves on a great circular platform of white marble, on which the only permanent objects are five large altar vessels of white marble placed a little north of the central stone on which the Emperor kneels. At intervals all round there are marble boulders with handles, shaped just like large curling-stones. These are the weights to which are attached the ropes of the yellow silken tent, or rather canopy, which is here erected at the great festivals, to overshadow the sacred tablets of Shang-te and the deceased Emperors, which are then brought to this spot, and before each are spread costly offerings, of the same sort as those which are invariably sacrificed to deceased ancestors, only in this case the genuine article is offered, and actually burnt, involving a most tantalising destruction of fine silk.

No fewer than twelve pieces of beautiful blue silk are burnt in

honour of Shang-te, and three pieces of white silk in honour of the Emperors—while seventeen pieces of red, yellow, blue, black, and white silk are burnt in honour of the heavenly bodies, whose tablets are arranged on either side of the second terrace. On the east side are set the tablets of the sun, the Great Bear, the five planets, the twenty-eight constellations, and one for all the stars. The tablet of the moon is placed on the west side, together with those of wind and rain, cloud and thunder.

Before every one of these tablets are set ample but slightly varied feasts; thus the stars above receive a full-grown bullock, a sheep, and a pig—while to Shang-te is offered a heifer which is laid between two brasiers, in front of the five marble altar vessels.

Before each tablet are placed lights and incense, with abundant offerings of food, and three cups of rice-wine. Twenty-eight dishes of divers meats, fruits, and vegetables are arranged in eight rows. These dishes consist of soups, with slices of beef and pork floating therein, pickled pork and vermicelli, slices of pickled hare and venison, salt fish, pickled fish, pickled onions, parsley and celery, bamboo shoots, boiled rice and millet, sweet cakes of wheat or buckwheat, flour and sugar, chestnuts, water-chestnuts, plums and walnuts.

Nor are seasonings forgotten for these Imperial feasts of the spirits—pepper and salt, sesamum-oil and anise-seed, soy and onions are provided.

All these things having been duly arranged, the Emperor approaches from the Hall of Fasting, arrayed in his sacrificial vestments, and mounts the altar, while all his courtiers and nobles take their places on the lower terraces, or round their base. He kneels and burns incense before the tablet of each Emperor, and then thrice prostrates himself before the tablet of Shang-te, knocking the ground nine times with his head. Each action must be exactly repeated by every worshipper present.

All this time the 234 blue-robed musicians have been making melody. Now there is a hushed silence, while the Emperor, kneeling, offers the pieces of blue silk, and a lovely large cylindrical piece of blue jade, which is the special symbol of heaven. Then a chorister chants an anthem describing the presentation of the food-offerings, during which attendants bring bowls of hot broth, which they sprinkle over the body of the heifer.

The Emperor then reads aloud a prayer which is inscribed on a blue wooden tablet, and will presently be burnt. In it the praises of the deceased Emperors are curiously interwoven with the solemn

petitions addressed to the Supreme Lord. He then offers separately three cups of wine. Every detail in all this elaborate ritual is ordained according to the strictest ceremonial law.

Now the 234 musicians chant "hymns of harmonious peace," with accompaniments of stringed instruments, while a great company of dancers move slowly through sacred figures.

After this there is a great stillness, and then follows a most remarkable sacramental mystery. A single voice is heard chanting the words[1]—"GIVE THE CUP OF BLESSING AND THE MEAT OF BLESSING;" *whereupon officers appointed for this honour present the Cup of Blessing and the Meat of Blessing to the Emperor, who partakes of each, and again prostrates himself and knocks his forehead three times against the ground, and then nine times more to symbolise his thankful reception of these gifts. All the princes and nobles present exactly follow the example of the Emperor.*

Then the choir bursts forth into a "song of glorious peace," while the tablets are solemnly carried back to their accustomed place in their blue-roofed chapel.

The written prayer, the incense, the silk, the viands, and the heifer, which were offered to Shang-te, are then carried to the great furnace, or altar of green porcelain, and the offerings to the ancestral Emperors—the silk, incense, and meats—are carried to the brasiers, and all are solemnly burned, the glare of this costly burnt-sacrifice glowing red in the cold starlight, while the Emperor and all the princes and nobles stand facing this sacred flame. The emblematic piece of blue jade-stone is replaced in its carved and gilded chair, and is carried back to its place in the temple.

Then the Emperor returns to his palace, and soon all trace of this grand ceremonial is swept away, and the great marble altar is deserted till the next solemn occasion of Imperial worship.

One such occasion is especially worthy of note. It is that on which, once every year, the Emperor lays aside his Imperial robes, and assuming penitential garments, walks from the Hall of Fasting to the Altar of Heaven, and there reads a list of all criminals who have been executed within the last year, praying that if any have been unjustly punished, they may not suffer in the spirit-world, on

[1] In a very interesting monograph on this subject, published in Shanghai, by the Rev. A. P. Happer, D.D., he points out the remarkable coincidence between this Cup of Blessing and the cup so named at the Jewish Paschal sacrifice; and taking this in connection with other points of similarity in the elaborate ritual, the gorgeous vestments, the large choir and orchestra, and all the strictly regulated details of burnt-sacrifice and libations, he suggests the probability that these are all survivals of the religious ceremonies observed by the common ancestors of the races before the dispersion of mankind from the Tower of Babel.

account of the ignominy with which they were dismissed from this (the idea being, that a criminal who has been decapitated is certain of hard lines in the unseen world! the fact of arriving without a head proving him quite unworthy of respect!)

One of the many interesting points to which Dr Edkins called my attention is the constant recurrence of multiples of 3 and 9 in all the structures of this unique place of worship. To begin with, each of the 3 terraces is ascended by 9 steps. In the centre of the North Altar, 3 concentric circles form a raised base of 3 steps, leading up to the 3-storeyed wooden temple, the height of which is 99 Chinese feet; the midnight sacrifice is illuminated by 3 great lights suspended from 3 tall poles.

All this is part of a Chinese symbolism which expresses abstract ideas by definite forms, colours, and numbers. First there is the mysterious Yin-yang, or symbolism of the dual principle in nature.[1] The Yin or feminine, which represents the Earth, is symbolised by a square figure and even numbers, 2, 4, 6, 8, 10. Whereas the Yang or male principle, representing Heaven, is symbolised by circular forms and odd numbers, 1, 3, 5, 7, 9. Therefore these threefold circular Altars to Heaven rest on a square base, and the upper platform of the great Southern Altar is paved with 9 circles of marble slabs (including the central circular stone on which the Emperor kneels). These circles are respectively laid in 9 slabs, 18 slabs, 27 slabs, and so on up to 9 times 9.

On the other hand, at the Temple of the Earth, to the north of Peking, the great altar is square, and each terrace is 6 feet in height, and the paving-bricks are laid in multiples of 6 and 8, because here even numbers must prevail. The altar is 60 feet square, and is surrounded by a ditch 6 feet wide, and a wall 6 feet high.

When this (Temple of Heaven) park was first set apart for this Imperial worship, A.D. 1421, by the third Emperor of the Ming dynasty, Earth and Heaven were here worshipped together at the Northern Altar, and instead of the three roofs being all blue, they were then blue, red, and yellow. In 1531 the ecclesiastical authorities decided that the Altar of the Earth should lie outside the walls on the north side of the Tartar city, where about 300 acres are encircled by double walls, coloured red, and roofed with bright

[1] In common with many other matters in China, the Ko-tow, or form of obeisance in presence of the Emperor, is thus regulated, and consists in thrice kneeling on all fours, and knocking the forehead on the ground nine times—*i.e.*, thrice at each prostration.

green tiles. The principal temple is roofed with yellow tiles, and all the subordinate buildings with green, yellow being symbolic of Earth, as blue is of Heaven. For this reason the 234 musicians are robed in black and gold, and some of the musical instruments are gilt, to represent yellow. The tent which is set up on the platform to act as a vast canopy is also of yellow cloth, and the Emperor appears in yellow robes. Here the especial symbol of Earth is a square piece of yellow jade, the equivalent of the cylindrical blue piece, which represents Heaven. The prayer is written on a yellow tablet, and, in common with the silk, the various animals, and the cooked food, it is buried instead of being burnt, the idea being that the offerings to the Earth-spirit must descend, even as those to Heaven must ascend.

The ritual here observed is much the same as that at the Altar of Heaven, as is also the appointed hour—two hours before sunrise. Instead of sacrificing before the tablets of Sun, Moon, and Stars, the Imperial worship at the Earth-temple honours the spirit of the four great Seas and the four greatest Rivers China; also of the fourteen greatest and most sacred Mountains of China and Manchuria. Each of these is represented by its tablet. The tablets of the deceased Emperors are also present, and receive offerings, which, however, are burnt, not buried.

Yet another temple in which the Emperor officiates as High Priest, and where the ceremonial is almost identical with that of the Earth-worship, is that which is dedicated to the Gods of Land and Grain. This lies in the Imperial city, on the right hand of the palace gate. Here the altar consists of two terraces, each ascended by flights of three steps. The upper terrace is covered with earth of five colours—blue to the east, white to the west, black to the north, red to the south, and yellow in the middle. On these terraces are placed the tablets of these two guardian spirits, both facing the north, and the tablets of two eminent Chinese agriculturists are placed on the right and left hand to occupy the honoured position of guests at the sacrificial banquets. These are offered in the middle of spring and autumn and on some other occasions, and by an odd combination of ideas, the animals offered are buried, but the silk and jade are burned.

Here, as at the temples of Earth and of Heaven, special precious stones are reverenced as emblematic—so the Land-god is symbolised by a square piece of yellow jade, and the Grain-god by a light-green piece.

While the worship of Heaven and of Earth is thus solemnly

celebrated in temples to the north and south of the city, two noteworthy survivals of the primitive Nature-worship are the Temple of the Sun on the eastern side of the Tartar city, and that of the Moon on the western side. That of the Sun consists of a square terrace only one storey in height, and ascended by four flights of steps from the four sides of the compass. It stands in a square walled enclosure of about the same size as is devoted to the Earth Temple—namely, 300 acres.

At the great annual Spring Festival, solemn service is held two hours before sunrise, when the Emperor ascends the Altar from the west, so as to face the tablet of the Sun, and the east. At this temple the Sun alone is worshipped, and is symbolised by a circular red stone. The walls are roofed with reddish tiles, the tablet of the Sun is placed beneath a red canopy, and the Imperial High Priest wears red robes.

The Moon, on the other hand, is symbolised by a white stone (? crystal); the walls are roofed with white tiles. The Emperor wears white robes, and a white canopy overshadows the tablets of the Moon, the twenty-eight constellations, and all the other stars. The form of the temple, and the ritual, are almost identical with those of the Sun Temple; but the tablet of the Moon faces the east, and those of the Stars face the south.

There is just one temple in the heart of the Imperial city, immediately to the north of the palace, which would seem to be a sort of adaptation of Heaven's Temple. It is called the Kwang-ming-tien or Temple of Light. Here are two marble terraces, one above the other, each ascended by six flights of twelve steps each (making a total of 144 steps). On the platform at the summit stands a circular wooden temple roofed with brilliant light-blue tiles; within this building an image of the Taouist God of Heaven sits enthroned above an altar supported by beautifully carved dragons. This pagoda, with its marble terraces, is in connection with a Taouist temple of the ordinary type.

By the time we had gone leisurely all over the ground, examining everything in detail, and I had secured sketches from several different points, the Grant party overtook us, and, in the innocence of my heart, I advanced pleasantly to renew acquaintance with the General, but was wholly at a loss to account for the remarkable combination of expressions which were plainly depicted on the countenances of his official entertainers and suites, both Chinese and American! These were really a study for a physiognomist!! Like certain Pharisaical Christians, they seemed to think that the

gates of heaven should open to them alone, and that the admission of others was an injury to themselves! I only congratulated myself the more on the advantages of early rising, which had not only secured an unchallenged entrance, but a peaceful occupation of a spot so replete with interest and suggestive of so much matter for thought.

We now recrossed the outer park, intending, according to our morning programme, to visit the great Temple of Agriculture which lies so near that of Heaven; but the sun being already high, and the heat overpowering, I contented myself with a look at its outer wall (which, like that of Heaven, enclosed about 300 acres), while Dr Edkins described how, at the beginning of spring (about the 5th of March), the Emperor and his great nobles come in state to this "Eminence of Venerable Agriculturists" (the Sien-nong-tan), and there offer a sacrificial banquet to Shin-Nung, the God of Husbandry.

The banquet includes a sheep, a pig, and nine kinds of grain and vegetables. In presenting these, the Emperor and his courtiers prostrate themselves and knock their heads nine times on the earth. Having read aloud a written prayer for prosperity in the ploughing and sowing, the nine head-knockings are again repeated. Then the Emperor and the Imperial Princes put off their official dress and assume that of peasants, and thus arrayed, they adjourn to a field ready for ploughing, where each takes his place in charge of an Imperial-yellow plough to which is yoked a buffalo led by a peasant, who (in honour of the occasion) is clothed in yellow. Each noble ploughman must plough nine furrows, and each is followed by an official whose duty is to sow the grain in the newly turned earth, while two companies of choristers, robed in festive attire, and stationed to east and west of the field, chant anthems in praise of agriculture. On the north side stand a crowd of literary men, and on the south a company of aged peasants in festal attire.

This remarkable ceremony is said to have been instituted by the Emperor Shun, who reigned about B.C. 2200, and was himself a keen practical farmer. The example thus set by the Emperor is followed by the great officials in every city throughout the empire, and the farmers are then at liberty to commence work in earnest.[1]

Within these grounds are four great altars, respectively dedicated

[1] In proof that this festival was not anciently peculiar to China, Mr Simpson quotes the 'Siamese Life of Buddha,' which tells how Suddhodana, King of Kapila and father of Buddha, celebrated the commencement of sowing time with Brahmins and nobles and 799 ploughs, with which they broke the earth, and then sowed the first seeds.

to the celestial and terrestrial gods, the God of the Year, and the Teacher of Husbandry. They are covered with sculpture to represent wind and waves, clouds, dragons, and mountains; and there are special tablets to mountains and hills, thunder-gods, wind, rain, and cloud-gods. Also to special rivers.

When the Emperor is about to travel, he comes here in person to offer sacrifices to the tutelary gods of the mountains, streams, and hills of the district to which he is going. Here, too, special prayers are offered for abundant rain and snow, and here thanks are returned when these mercies have been vouchsafed.

We had ample time to contemplate the outer wall of this famous temple, while waiting for the return of the driver, who had gone off to indulge in an opium-pipe. At last, weary of loitering in the grilling sun, we started to meet him—the Doctor himself leading the cart. Presently we came to the temple of the God of Medicine, and there halted, hoping to see the statues of all the most celebrated Chinese doctors. The temple, however, was securely locked up, and we had to be satisfied with inspecting its very gaudy "joss-theatre," the decorations of which are not nearly so artistic as those of Southern China.

As we neared the huge walls of the Tartar city, we successively met two great funeral processions, which formed striking foregrounds to the venerable grey walls and stupendous many-storeyed gateway. A funeral here does not imply sombre black, but a wealth of rich positive colour. Nor is there any conventional excess of rigid obedience to undertakers and milliners, for most picturesque tatterdemalions are allowed a place in the funeral processions of even wealthy citizens such as these.

In the present instance a company of such headed the first procession, carrying scarlet objects stuck on long poles, like advertisement boards, with Chinese characters inscribed in gold. These are the titles of the deceased and his ancestors. Various other symbolic insignia were also carried on tall poles. Then came a troop of musicians beating gongs, drums, and copper cymbals, and blowing trumpets with deafening noise, as an accompaniment to the lugubrious howls of hired mourners. These were all clothed in dark blue. Then came a gorgeous erection of huge scarlet-and-gold beams and cross-beams, the use of which I failed to learn. Then in a fine gilded sedan-chair came the tablet of the deceased, and above it floated a crimson satin banner bearing his name in letters of gold. Another company of men in everyday dress followed, each bearing a long stick with a gilt top. After these came

a procession of half-a-dozen brilliant scarlet ecclesiastical umbrellas —triple umbrellas, one above the other (like the triple roof of Heaven's Temple).

These were followed by Taouist priests, robed in blue satin; and then came the funeral car—an immense catafalque, with a canopy and drapery of the richest blue satin, embroidered with golden dragons. This most cumbersome bier was carried by a very large number of bearers dressed in green, and having red feathers in their hats; there must have been about fifty of these. Then followed the chief mourners on foot, some dressed in white and some in sackcloth; then a long string of the ordinary blue Peking carts (which represent mourning and private carriages) containing more white-robed mourners. Among these were some sedan-chairs, with four bearers. Then came more state umbrellas, more scarlet boards and banners, more noisy musicians, and then an immense crowd of rag-tag, attracted by the brave spectacle.[1]

Scarcely had the last of these passed us when, just as we came to the great gateway, a renewed burst of dismal music warned us to stand aside, and a second long funeral train came forth. This was that of a woman, apparently of some standing, for the procession was in most respects very similar to the first, only in place of the extraordinary structure of scarlet-and-gold beams, there was a sort of ark closely covered with yellow embroidered cloth, and the funeral car was heavily draped with dark-purple silk, embroidered with large luck-conferring fishes.

With the addition of many camels crouching in the hot dust outside the great grey walls, and the mixed crowd of Mongolians, Tartars, and long-tailed Chinamen, the scene was all exceedingly picturesque, and I crept out of my secluded cart in order to see it better. But what with the grilling heat, the clouds of stifling dust, and the powerful and most unfragrant *bouquet de peuple*, I was not sorry when the procession had cleared the great double gate-

[1] Amongst the details of a recent funeral (that of Prince Lau-Fu) we are told that the procession was headed by thirty-six men clothed in bright green. These were followed by a hundred clad in crimson, and bearing tablets recording the titles and honours of the dead. *Then came twenty attendants, leading the Prince's hounds—a pack numbering two hundred and forty.* Afterwards came his horses, camels, mules, sedan-chairs, and his private carriage drawn by a mule, also a chair of state, covered with a tiger-skin, and borne by sixteen men dressed in green silk. Then followed a regiment of cavalry and a body of infantry. A company of thirty-two priests and the temple musicians immediately preceded the coffin, which was covered with a silken pall, and carried by eighty men. Six empty carriages represented the Emperor, and were followed by many great mandarins on foot. It is stated that the Prince's clothes, carriages, tents, and arms were all burned, that their owner might have the use of them in the spirit-world!

way, and we were able to pass into the Tartar city, and jolt and bump down the main street, till we joyfully reached the shelter of this most hospitable roof.

You might think we had seen enough for one day, but this afternoon, when food and rest had done their blessed work, I started once more with Dr and Mrs Dudgeon in one of the dreadful carts, and we bumped along to the United States Legation, there to call on Mrs Grant, who sorely envied us our morning's expedition! As we stopped at the gate, a flock of large sheep dashed past us, and one getting frightened, leaped clean over the back of our mule, which so alarmed it that it kicked violently when I was climbing out. When we left the Legation and tried to get in again, the nervous creature became so restive that I had fairly to spring in, thinking it would then go on, and expend its energies on the cart-ruts and pitfalls of the road, instead of which, it waxed so violent that we dared not go on, so it was blindfolded to enable me to get out again.

Being thus independent of wheels, it seemed a favourable opportunity for a walk on the walls, so as to get a bird's-eye view of the city. We accordingly walked some distance to the great South Gate, and there to our intense aggravation found that the small gate which gives access to the ramparts was locked in consequence of a Government order issued a few days ago. Half an hour was expended in vain expostulation, but without avail, so we consoled ourselves by exploring the quaintest very narrow street of tiny curio-shops, running round the curtain of the great wall. It was a very odd, amusing place, and I bought some strange little knick-knacks as memorials.

I was much tempted by most fascinating snuff-bottles, which are a specialty of Peking, but the most attractive proved far beyond the limits of my purse, and I had to be satisfied with some very simple specimens, one of very thick dull-green glass, and one of white glass incrusted with pink flowers. The more costly ones are of a sort of scarlet and yellow slag, or of jade of various tints, or pebble cut so as to show a raised pattern in a different colour from the groundwork. They are the size of a flattened egg, and the snuff is taken out on a minute wooden spoon which is attached to the stopper. Chinese gentlemen wear these snuff-bottles suspended from the girdle, as are also their watch, their purse, the richly embroidered case in which they deposit their fan on the rare occasions when it is not in use, the case containing their favourite chop-sticks, the embroidered pouch containing their keys, the case

containing their huge spectacles, and any other trifles they may wish to carry about with them! This comes of not having pockets in which to stow away such articles.

From this quaint street we made our way back on foot—a long and very dusty walk, yet better than undergoing the anguish of being battered in the springless cart!

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE GREAT LAMA TEMPLE.

The Great Lama Temple—"The Living Buddha"—Obnoxious monks—In the Great Temple—All-Saints' Praise-Wheel—Variations in ecclesiastical dress—Temple of Confucius—The porcelain *pai-low*—Antique stone drums—Confucian books engraved in marble—Stone books of Burmah—Hall of the Classics—An Imperial lecture—Chinese libraries—The Bamboo Book.

June 7th.

This morning, soon after 5 A.M., Dr Dudgeon took me to see the Yung-ho-kung, a very fine old Lama temple, just within the wall, at the north-east corner of the Tartar city. It contains about 1300 monks of all ages down to small boys six years old, under the headship of a Lama, who assumes the title of "The Living Buddha."

These monks are Mongol Tartars of a very bad type, dirty and greedy of gain; and, moreover, are known to be grossly immoral. They are generally offensively insolent to all foreigners, many of whom have vainly endeavoured to obtain access to the monastery, —even the silver key, which is usually so powerful in China, often failing to unlock the inhospitable gates.

That I had the privilege of entrance was solely due to the personal influence of Dr Dudgeon, whose medical skill has happily proved so beneficial to "The Living Buddha," and several of the priests, as to ensure him a welcome from these. It was not, however, an easy task to get at these men, as a particularly insolent monk was acting as doorkeeper, and attempted forcibly to prevent our entrance. That, however, was effected by the judicious pressure of a powerful shoulder, and after a stormy argument, the

wretch was at length overawed, and finally reduced to abject humility by threats to report his rudeness to the head Lama.

At long last, after wearisome expostulation and altercation, every door was thrown open to us, but the priest in charge of each carefully locked it after us, lest we should avoid giving him an individual tip, or *kum-sha*, as it is here called. Happily I had a large supply of five and ten cent silver pieces, which the doctor's knowledge of Chinese custom compelled our extortioners to accept. At the same time, neither of us could avoid a qualm as each successive door was securely locked, and a vision presented itself of possible traps into which we might be decoyed.

Every corner of the great building is full of interest, from the brilliant yellow china tiles of the roof to the yellow carpet in the temple. The entrance is adorned with stone carvings of animals, and the interior is covered with a thousand fantastic figures carved in wood—birds, beasts, and serpents, flowers and monstrous human heads, mingle in grotesque confusion. It is rich in silken hangings, gold embroidery, huge picturesque paper lanterns of quaint form, covered with Chinese characters and grotesque idols, canopied by very ornamental baldachinos.

Conspicuous amongst these idols is Kwang-te, who was a distinguished warrior at the beginning of the Christian era, and who about eight hundred years later was deified as the God of War, and State temples were erected in his honour in every city of the empire. So his shrine is adorned with all manner of armour, especially bows and arrows—doubtless votive offerings. He is a very fierce-looking god, and is attended by two colossal companions, robed in the richest gold-embroidered silk. Another gigantic image is that of a fully armed warrior leading a horse. I believe he is Kwang-te's armour-bearer. In various parts of the temple hang trophies of arms and military standards, which are singular decorations for a temple wherein Buddha is the object of supreme worship.

But the fact is, that though Kwang-te is the God of War, he is also emphatically "Protector of the Peace," and his aid is invoked in all manner of difficulties, domestic or national. For instance, when the great salt-wells in the province of Shansi dried up, the sorely perplexed Emperor was recommended by the Taouist High Priest to lay the case before Kwang-te. The Emperor therefore wrote an official despatch on the subject, which was solemnly burnt, and thus conveyed to the spirit-world, when lo! in answer to the Son of Heaven, the Warrior-god straightway appeared in the clouds,

mounted on his red war-horse, and directed the Emperor to erect a temple in his honour. This was done, and the salt-springs flowed as before.

Kwang-te again appeared in 1855, during the Taiping rebellion, to aid the Imperial troops near Nankin, for which kind interposition Hien-feng, the reigning Emperor (whose honour-conferring power extends to the spirit-world), promoted him to an equal rank with Confucius! So here we find him reverenced alike by Taouists and Buddhists![1]

All the altar-vases in this temple are of the finest Peking enamel —vases, candlesticks, and incense-burners, from which filmy clouds of fragrant incense float upward to a ceiling panelled with green and gold. Fine large scroll paintings tempted me to linger at every turn, and the walls are incrusted with thousands of small porcelain images of Buddha.

In the main temple, which is called the Foo-koo or Hall of Buddha, stands a cyclopean image of Matreya, the Buddha of Futurity. It is seventy feet in height, and is said to be carved from one solid block of wood, but it is coloured to look like bronze. Ascending a long flight of steps, we reached a gallery running round the temple about the level of his shoulders. I found that this gallery led into two circular buildings, one on each side, constructed for the support of two immense rotating cylinders, about seventy feet in height, full of niches, each niche containing the image of a Buddhist saint.

They are rickety old things, and thickly coated with dust, but on certain days worshippers come and stick on strips of paper, bearing prayers. To turn these cylinders is apparently an act of homage to the whole saintly family, and enlists the goodwill of the whole lot. Some Lama monasteries deal thus with their 128 sacred books and 220 volumes of commentary, placing them in a huge cylindrical bookcase, which they turn bodily, to save the

[1] This is by no means a unique instance of the Imperial favour being thus shown to (doubtless appreciative) spirits. In 1725 the Emperor Yung Ching bestowed divers honours and new titles on the four great dragons who dwell in the four seas. Again, in the 'Peking Gazette' for July 28, 1861, was published the petition of the Director-General of Grain Transport, praying the Emperor to reward the god Kwang-te for his interposition on the 11th of March, whereby two cities were saved from the rebels. He states that such was the anxiety evinced by this guardian god, that his worshippers saw the perspiration trickle from his image in the temple. The Emperor duly acknowledged these good services, and desired that a tablet should be erected in memory thereof. And so recently as 1877 and 1878 the Emperor officially intimated that whereas the empire had been sorely afflicted with drought, and now sufficient rain had fallen through the intervention of the Dragon-spirit of Han Tan Hien, in token of national gratitude, the said spirit should henceforth be invested with the title of "Dragon Spirit of the Sacred Well."

trouble of turning individual pages—the understanding having apparently small play in either case.

Dr Edkins saw one of these in the Ling-yin Monastery at Hang-Chow, and another of octagonal form, and sixty feet in height, at the Poo-sa-ting pagoda in the Wootai Valley (a district in which there are perhaps two thousand Mongol Lamas). At the same monastery where he saw this revolving library, there were three hundred revolving prayer or praise wheels, and at another he observed a most ingenious arrangement, whereby the steam ascending from the great monastic kettle (which is kept ever boiling to supply the ceaseless demand for tea) does further duty by turning a praise-wheel which is suspended from the ceiling! I myself have seen many revolving libraries at Buddhist temples in Japan, but this is the first thing of the same character that I have seen in China.

It was nearly 6 A.M. ere we reached the Lama temple, so that we were too late to see the grand morning service, as that commences at 4 A.M., when upwards of a hundred mats are spread in the temple, on each of which kneel ten of the subordinate Lamas, all wearing their yellow robes and a sort of classical helmet of yellow felt, with a very high crest like that worn by Britannia. They possess red felt boots, but can only enter the temple barefooted. The Great Lama wears a violet-coloured robe and a yellow mitre. He bears a sort of crosier, and occupies a gilded throne before the altar: a cushion is provided for him to kneel upon. The whole temple is in darkness or dim twilight, save the altar, which is ablaze with many tapers.

When the great copper gong sounds its summons to worship, they chant litanies in monotone, one of the priests reading prayers from a silken scroll, and all joining in a low murmur, while clouds of incense fill the temple. A peculiarity of this chant is, that while a certain number of the brethren recite the words, the others sing a continuous deep bass accompaniment. Again the gong marks the change from prayer to sacred chants, and after these comes a terrible din of instrumental music—a clatter of gongs, bells, conch-shells, tambourines, and all manner of ear-splitting abominations. Then follows a silence which may be felt, so utter is the stillness and so intense the relief.

With regard to dress, this seems to vary in different regions, and perhaps may denote different sects. Here and throughout Mongolia (where monasticism is in such repute that every family which possesses more than one son is obliged to devote one to the

monastic life) every Lama wears the long yellow robe, with yellow mantle and yellow helmet—the last two items being always worn during the services in the temple; whereas in Ceylon, though the priests are robed in yellow, all are bareheaded. On the other hand, those we saw in the Northern Himalayas wore scarlet clothing and scarlet caps shaped like a crown.[1]

(By the way, speaking of ecclesiastical head-gear, I am told that throughout Thibet, Queen Victoria's effigy (current on the British Indian rupee) is familiarly known as that of a "wandering Lama" (*Lama tob-du*)—her regal crown being supposed to represent the head-dress of a religious mendicant!!)

I would fain have spent hours in looking through the many interesting details of this place, and the priests, when once assured that they could extract nothing larger than ten-cent pieces, became so eager to multiply these, that they volunteered to show us every nook and corner. But so much time had been wasted at first, and we were so disconcerted by the annoyance to which they had subjected us, that we were fairly tired out, and finally were compelled to decline further inspection. Of course now I regret that we did not further improve the unique occasion, and see everything we possibly could. But truly, in the matter of sight-seeing, flesh is sometimes weak!

Besides, as we had come such a long distance, it was well to secure this opportunity of seeing the Wen-Miao, the great Confucian temple, which is very near. I have now seen a great many of these temples to the honour of Confucius, and practically they are all alike, the impression they convey being that of great mausoleums. They are, in fact, ancestral halls, containing only ornamental tablets bearing the names of noted saints. This, however, is an unusually fine specimen. It stands in shady silent grounds, and the funereal character of the place is happily suggested by groves of fine old cypress-trees, said to be five hundred years old, and by numerous large stone tablets resting on the backs of huge stone tortoises. Some of these stones occupy small shrines roofed with yellow porcelain tiles, and commemorate various learned men.

But the objects of chief interest connected with this temple are some relics of a remote past, which in Chinese estimation are of inestimable value.

Chief among these are ten large cylindrical stones, shaped like

[1] See 'In the Himalayas and on Indian Plains,' p. 437. C. F. Gordon Cumming. Chatto & Windus.

gigantic cheeses, which for lack of a better name are called Stone Drums. The Chinese believe them to have been respectively engraven in the days of Yaou and Shun, who lived B.C. 2357 and B.C. 2255. Reference is made to them, as objects worthy of reverence, in a classic bearing date about B.C. 500. Certain it is that such interest has ever attached to them, that whenever the Emperors of China have changed their capital, these stone drums have also been removed. The story of their wanderings is as curious as the legendary history of our own much-venerated Coronation Stone in Westminster Abbey.[1] (But the fortunes of the present dynasty are specially connected with the six unhewn stones in the cypress-grove at the Temple of Heaven.) Apparently these also were rude water-worn boulders, which were shaped and inscribed to commemorate certain Imperial hunting expeditions. When the fame of Confucius caused all literary interests to cluster around his name, they were deposited in one of his temples, where they were preserved for upwards of a thousand years.

Then came a period of wars and troubles, during which the great stones disappeared. They were, however, recovered A.D. 1052, and placed in the gateway of the Imperial College. Then the Tartars invaded Northern China, and the Imperial Court fled to Pien-Ching, in the province of Honan, carrying with them these cumbersome great stones. In A.D. 1108 a decree was passed that the inscriptions should be filled in with gold in order to preserve them. In A.D. 1126 another Tartar tribe captured the city of Pien-Ching, and carried the ten stones back to Peking, where for a while even they shared the fate of all things in this city. They were allowed to fall into neglect, and sacrilegious hands removed the gold. Worse still, some Vandal (of a class not peculiar to China!) carried off one of the stones, and ruthlessly converted it into a drinking-trough for cattle! After many years, when antiquarian interest was reawakened, it was found to be missing, and after long search its mutilated remains were discovered in a farmyard and brought back to be deposited with the others (A.D. 1307) in their present post of honour.

The stones derive additional interest from the fact that the character in which the poetic stanzas are inscribed is now obsolete. To avoid all danger of their ever again being lost, a set of exact copies have been made by Imperial command.

[1] For legend of the Coronation Stone, see 'In the Hebrides,' p. 83. C. F. Gordon Cumming. Chatto & Windus.

Less venerable, but certainly more imposing to the outward eye, is another memorial in stone, which is stored in the corridors encircling the court of the Peking University, which adjoins the Confucian Temple. This is a series of no fewer than 200 noble slabs of black marble, like upright gravestones, 12 feet in height, whereon are engraved the whole of the thirteen books of Confucius. It appears that by some extraordinary accident there was once upon a time (B.C. 212) an Emperor of China, by name Shi Hwang-ti, of the Ts'in dynasty, so depraved as to endeavour to destroy every existing copy of this source of all wisdom! I have no doubt that his early years had been embittered by the story of those wearisome volumes, and when, on his accession to the throne, he was expected to expound their doctrine to all his officials and mandarins, his soul was filled with a wild desire to commit them once for all to the flames!

The ostensible reason, however, for his wholesale raid on the wise books was one of political expediency. He was a strong-handed ruler—the builder of the Great Wall of China—a man not easily turned from his purpose. At that time literary contests between the followers of Confucius and those of Laou-tsze ran high, and were doubtless blended with political intrigue. Consequently Li Sze, the Prime Minister of the day, urged his Imperial master to secure his own position by utterly crushing these literary factions and destroying an immense number of books which tended to keep up discussions; for, whereas implicit obedience to the Emperor was the one thing needful, these numerous scholars "deemed it fine to have extraordinary views of their own," even presuming to talk of them in the streets!

It was therefore decreed that all national records should at once be burnt, save those only which related to the Imperial House of Ts'in, and that all scholars possessing copies of the 'Book of History,' the 'Book of Odes,' and other proscribed works, should bring them to the public officers to be burnt. That failing to do so within thirty days, they should be branded and sent to labour for four years in the Great Wall; that persons presuming to meet for discussion concerning these books should be put to death, and their bodies exposed in the market-place—the like fate being allotted to whosoever should venture to draw invidious contrasts between the good old times and the present. And not only was this penalty to attach to the actual offenders, but to all their relatives, extending even to Government officials, who, knowing of such offenders, failed to report their crime.

Of course many scholars endeavoured to evade compliance with this arbitrary decree of ruthless vandalism, and some succeeded in saving both their books and their lives. It is, however, recorded, that upwards of 460 were detected in this offence, and were buried alive as a warning to whosoever should presume to disobey the Imperial mandate.

The only books spared in this general destruction were such as related to divination, husbandry, and medicine; while all those bearing on science, art, or history, all records of primitive ages, and all manuscripts written in the earliest characters (which would now be of such priceless value), were ruthlessly destroyed.

Possibly, had Shi Hwang-ti succeeded in thus exterminating the Confucian books, he might have delivered his country from its mental bondage to "The Example and Teacher of all Ages." He failed, however, for many men survived who were so deeply imbued with the letter of the classics, that the whole were soon faultlessly reproduced.

The way it came about was this:—

A very few years elapsed ere the Ts'in dynasty was overthrown by that of Han, and for the space of three months, fighting and fire devastated the land, and especially the capital. When peace was restored, the new Emperor called upon all scholars to aid him in reconstructing the national libraries, and straightway from all manner of strange hiding-places the literary treasures were brought forth. From mountain-caves, from niches and hollow places in old walls, from the depths of the forest, the carefully concealed volumes were produced, while some engraven on bamboo slips and wooden tablets were rescued even from the beds of rivers, where they had been safely hidden.

From the lips of old men and of learned women portions of the missing books were rewritten. A blind man was found to be able to repeat a large portion of the condemned 'Book of History,' and his words were taken down by scribes; and a young girl, blessed with a marvellous memory, was able to supply another portion.

So effectually was this literary restoration accomplished, that the most learned scholars were satisfied with its accuracy. But in case such another Herod should ever arise, it was decided that these words of wisdom should be preserved on imperishable marble, which, moreover, should for ever ensure the Chinese character in which they were inscribed, against any change. So, round a great court, known as the Hall of the Classics, are ranged these tall,

solemn marble tablets[1]—embodiments of the dead-weight wherewith the Present is hampered with the Past; and here once a-year the Emperor is obliged to give that lecture, the very thought of which I assume to have so distracted his ancestor!

The approach to this hall is by a triple gateway of the peculiar *pai-low* form, most beautifully decorated with green and yellow porcelain tiles, so that the whole appears to be made of china. A very ornamental pavilion, decorated with gold dragons on a green ground, stands in the centre of an ornamental tank, and is approached by several beautiful marble bridges.

Our sight-seeing capacities were now so thoroughly exhausted that we were thankful once more to get curled up in the terrible Peking cab, and to know that each jolt brought us nearer to the Mission-House and to a welcome breakfast.

Note.—It may be interesting before going further just to glance at a few details concerning Chinese literature.

It would seem to require a life's study to master the vast array of complicated characters which form the Chinese equivalent of our simple alphabet. Yet these are comparatively easy compared with the far more complex systems used by scholars in the earlier ages of Chinese literature, and it was a herculean task which was taken by the great Confucius (about the year B.C. 600), when, as Keeper of the Archives in the Royal State of Chow, he resolved to inspect and classify the heterogeneous mass of manuscripts committed to his care, and dating from remotest ages. The earliest of these records were inscribed in a sort of hieroglyphic generally described as "the tadpole character." Of later date was "the seal character," still used for certain classes of writing. The invention of the characters now in general use is attributed to the Emperor Fuh-hi, who lived B.C. 2852, so they possess whatever merit attaches to the antiquity of having existed for four thousand years!

Many of the documents examined and digested by Confucius had reference to early Chinese history, religious ceremonies, and scientific discoveries. Bitterly do learned men regret the strong

[1] This method of honouring sacred books has recently been imitated by the King of Burmah, who has had the sacred books of the "Beetigal" thus engraven on 728 slabs of alabaster, each about five feet in height by three feet six in width, and four inches thick. The slabs are engraven on both sides, and over each is erected a miniature dome-shaped dagoba, surmounted by the golden symbol of the honorific umbrella. Hitherto the Burmese sacred books have been inscribed only on palm-leaves, therefore the king takes this means of preserving them, and of acquiring personal merit, at a cost of about £36,400, each slab costing about 500 rupees.

national pride and prejudice which led Confucius to reject utterly, as unworthy of recognition, about three hundred manuscripts which seem to have had relation to barbarous States beyond the charmed circle of China proper, or rather of those north-eastern States which alone were recognised by the great philosopher.

From these ancient materials he compiled a hundred books, and whatever further knowledge he deemed worthy of preservation was incorporated with his own voluminous writings, which have ever since been recognised as the most sacred heritage of every Chinaman.

Many of these early records were inscribed on bamboo tablets, of which a very large number were deposited in the tomb of the Emperor Kiang Siang. The tomb was broken open by robbers about A.D. 250, and in order to obtain light to guide their plundering, they burnt a considerable number of these precious relics of the past. The others were rescued and committed to the most learned antiquaries of the empire to be deciphered. They were found to be treatises on history, divination, &c., &c., and are now known as the Bamboo Book.

Of course, in a country where literary distinction was the certain road to honour, books on every conceivable subject multiplied with incredible velocity, as we may judge from the records of those which on different occasions have been destroyed, either by accident or by the deeds of ruthless men. Indeed, but for these periodical catastrophes, it might well seem as if "the world itself could not contain the books that had been written."

Thus within two centuries of the wholesale raid perpetrated by Shi Hwang-ti, the State libraries had recovered upwards of 3000 works on the classics, 2700 on philosophy, 2500 on mathematics, 1300 on poetry, 700 on military matters, and 800 on medicine.

Ere many years had elapsed, the Han dynasty passed away, and was succeeded by that of Wei, under whose auspices the catalogue of the Imperial library soon numbered 30,000 volumes, all of which were destroyed by fire in the course of a popular revolution, when the Wei dynasty was overthrown, to be succeeded by that of Liang. Again, with much care and toil, successive emperors accumulated a new library, but this too was burnt towards the close of the fifth century. Phœnix-like, from the ashes of this conflagration arose yet another great collection of 33,000 books, in addition to many works on Buddhism. Ere fifty years had elapsed, these also were burnt, in the course of another great rebellion.

About the year A.D. 618 the T'ang dynasty was established, and

the land had rest from its long internal wars. Under the peaceful sway of this Imperial house, a new library of 80,000 books was collected—and rightly to appreciate this statement it is necessary to remember that, though the art of making paper from the inner bark of trees, fishing-nets, and old rags, had been discovered by the Marquis Ts'ai about a hundred years before the Christian era, that of printing was not known, or at least not generally adopted, till about the year A.D. 1000, under the patronage of the emperors of the Sung dynasty.

From that time to the present, each successive dynasty has done its part to encourage literature—none more heartily than the Tartar race who now reign.

The Emperor Yunglo, of the Ming dynasty, who ascended the throne in A.D. 1403, resolved to have a vast encyclopedia compiled which should embrace all desirable knowledge. For this purpose he appointed no less than 2000 commissioners, who, after toiling for four years, presented the Emperor with a nice handy book of reference in TWENTY-TWO THOUSAND NINE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SEVEN VOLUMES!! However valuable this work might have proved, it was decided that it was rather too voluminous for the printers; so the fruit of so much toil was stored in manuscript, in the Imperial Palace at Peking, where its remains are still treasured.

The idea thus suggested was carried out 300 years later by the Manchu Emperor K'ang-hi, who commissioned the wise men of the empire to illustrate upwards of 6000 subjects, by collecting all allusions to them which might be scattered among existing books. This encyclopedia of extracts was published in A.D. 1726, and consists of upwards of 5000 volumes, containing the cream of Chinese literature.

A complete copy of this very comprehensive and valuable work has recently been secured for the British Museum, whose own amazing catalogue scarcely eclipses that of the Imperial library, published at the close of the eighteenth century, and enumerating upwards of 173,000 volumes on all branches of literature, without including works of fiction, dramas, or any books relating to the Taouist or Buddhist religions. It is, however, necessary to add that the majority of the books are little more than mere commentaries, by intellectual pigmies of modern days, on the writings of men possessed of a far wider range of thought and freer imagination than these, their cramped descendants.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

COMPETITIVE EXAMINATIONS.

The Examination Hall—Classical studies—Venerable students—Literary degrees—Official honours—The Observatory—Astronomical instruments.

June 7th.

In the afternoon Dr Edkins took me to see the far-famed Examination Hall, where once in three years all the students who have succeeded in taking degrees at the great examinations in the provincial cities, assemble to try and pass the higher standard which admits them to the much-coveted rank of Tsin-sze—*i.e.*, "advanced scholars."

Anything more dismally dreary and dilapidated than this great theatre of national learning could not be imagined. At its best it seems specially designed for discomfort, but as the examinations are only held here triennially, the place is allowed between whiles to fall into utter decay, and a fine crop of nettles, coarse weeds, and broken pottery gives the crowning touches of dreariness to the whole place.

This so-called "Hall" is the facsimile of the Examination Hall which we went to see at Canton, and of one at Foo-Chow, of which I only cared to inspect the roofs, as seen from the city wall (I believe there are similar places in every provincial capital). The name "Hall" is altogether misleading. It is simply a very large walled enclosure, in the centre of which stands the house wherein lodge the ten Provincial Examiners and the two Imperial Examiners. Of this latter, two are despatched from Peking to each of the eighteen provinces, where they are received with extraordinary honour.

With the exception of the broad central road, the whole remaining space is filled with rows and rows of tiny cells, each about three feet square. Each row has its distinctive name, and each cell is numbered, so that any man could be summoned if requisite. I cannot call these rows streets, because they all face the same way, each looking on to the blank back of the next cell, so that there may be nothing to distract the attention of the candidates. The cells have no doors, so that the whole front is open, and special officers are always on the watch to prevent any sort of communica-

tion between the men; other watchmen are posted on the central building, and in towers at the corners of the wall, to see that no one from outside attempts to assist those within.

In each of the three Examination Halls which I happen to have seen, I was told that there are ten thousand of these cells, and one might suppose that these would surely accommodate all the competitors. This, however, is by no means the case. They occasionally overflow their limits, and have to be provided for after the manner in which vergers accommodate the extra members of a bumper congregation—with seats in the aisle! Thus, on at least one occasion, at the triennial examination at Hang-Chow (where there are cells for 13,000 students), no less than 15,000 presented themselves, so 2000 sedan-chairs were brought in, and ranged in the passages which intersect the blocks of cells. In like manner, though Canton provides cells for 10,000 students, upwards of 13,000 sometimes arrive, although they know that only ninety degrees can possibly be conferred! The number of degrees to be bestowed varies in different provinces, doubtless bearing some proportion to population.

There certainly is not much attention paid to the bodily comfort of the students—mind being required entirely to triumph over matter! The cells, which might justly be described as pigsties, are only three feet eight in width, and five feet six inches in length. Each is built with two grooves running round the wall, to allow for the insertion of two wooden boards, one of which acts as a very hard seat, the other (which is slipped into its place after the student is seated) forms the table on which he is to work. At night he transfers his table into the lower groove, on a level with the seat, and so secures a hard but level bed.

These two boards and a large earthenware water-jar are the sole furnishings of the cell, which is so small that a stout man clothed in the usual wadded garments must find it almost impossible even to turn round, and his only rest at night is such as he can obtain on the hard wooden boards, without so much as one wadded quilt to save his poor bones!

A perfect regiment of cooks and of waiters attend to the commissariat, one of each being told off to every twenty cells. They are bound by oath to hold no communication with the prisoners!

This vast multitude of students (only imagine the number represented by ALL provincial towns throughout the empire!—one for each of the eighteen provinces, one for the island of Formosa, and the other city examinations besides!) are the guests of the Emperor

during the term of examination, the rations allowed for each man being a given weight of salt fish, of pork, and of ham; a full quantity of rice, four cakes, some pickled vegetables, one preserved egg, and hot tea, and congee water *ad lib.*

On no consideration may the student leave his cell from the beginning of each examination to its close. Happily it is divided into three distinct parts, each of which lasts for three days and three nights, one clear day's interval being allowed between each section.

From first to last it is all a tremendous effort of memory, each student as he enters his cell being searched to make sure that he has not concealed any scrap of paper on which he might have jotted helpful notes, or, worse than all, a miniature edition of any part of the classics, an offence which would be punished by expulsion, after having been compelled to kneel ignominiously at the gates. Each man must bring his own Indian ink and brushes, but he must bring no paper.

To prevent all possibility of fraud, he must at the last moment purchase paper which has been stamped with the official seal. Provided with this, he enters the cell, and then only is the subject of examination announced. The said subjects are all themes from the fossilised Confucian classics, or essays on the history of China, its laws, its rites, and ceremonies. At one of the examinations each man is required to write a poem of twelve lines, attaining a certain standard of excellence. This is compulsory, and the man who fails in his rhymes is deemed incapable of governing a prison or a province, or of holding any other State office!

Happily for the examiners, the length of the essays is limited, 720 characters being the maximum, and 360 the minimum. To allow for necessary corrections, 100 characters may be marked on the margin.

The greatest stress is laid upon excellent handwriting, and as a highly educated Chinaman is expected to be familiar with *six different styles of writing*, he has a somewhat perplexing choice. He may adopt the ancient stiff characters, or the ordinary freehand characters used in business, or those which are preferred for general correspondence, or the regular characters used in printing. The literary man, however, selects one known as Kiai-shoo, which is considered the most elegant.

I scarcely know which to pity most—the students, or the examiners who have to wade through such mountains of dry Confucian wisdom. On the whole, I think the examiners have the worst of

it; for though a student is occasionally found dead in his cell, he has only one set of essays to produce, and he is always buoyed up by hope of success and ambitious dreams—whereas the luckless examiners have to wade through, and carefully weigh the merits of, perhaps 8000 of these dreary sets of papers, with no ambition to gratify, and the certainty of causing grievous disappointment to upwards of 7900 students, besides all their parents, and relatives, and friends, a multitude of whom invariably take this opportunity for a visit to the city, and so combine a little pleasure with this literary interest. It is, however, to be feared that their visit is not always attended with much pleasure, as it is found that epidemics of smallpox in Peking generally occur in the examination year, and these are attributed to the influx of at least 40,000 strangers!

To get through the papers, the examiners have to work for several days and nights almost without intermission. No wonder that many utterly break down in mind and body, and are rendered useless for life from divers affections of the brain, thus produced! Several examiners of the very highest rank have at different times been brought to the Medical Mission for treatment, having been seized with paralysis in the course of the examinations, entirely in consequence of the prolonged strain which left them utterly prostrate, and so their work has remained unfinished.

The same thing happens to many of the students (to whom, of course, this examination is only the conclusion of a long course of cramming, and that of the class which is said to be the most physically exhausting—namely, an intense strain on the memory).

One would naturally suppose that no one who could avoid it would subject himself to such misery, but this extraordinary nation recognises no possibility of official promotion by any other channel than this (the only form of literary success), without which even the most noble birth avails nothing, consequently many of the men who fail return undaunted to the charge year after year,[1] till either their efforts are crowned with success, or they finally break down. Some, as I have said, literally die in harness, in which case a hole is broken in the outer wall of the enclosure, and the corpse is thrust out—for a stringent regulation prohibits opening the gate while the men are in their cells, and traditional custom must be maintained in the presence of Death himself.

On the other hand, some men of indomitable resolution perse-

[1] The population of China is divided into four recognised classes—namely, Shi, Nung, Kung, Shang; in other words, Scholars, Farmers, Artisans, and Merchants.

vere in their pursuit of literary honour till they attain to extreme old age, and it is no uncommon thing to see venerable grey-bearded students of from seventy to eighty years of age taking their place in these dismal cells! Such perseverance is at least sure of honorary recognition by the Emperor, who bestows a special title on men who have vainly continued their literary efforts to the age of fourscore years. In the province of Shangtung, a great arch of very elaborately sculptured granite commemorates the literary triumph of a noted scholar who in his eighty-third year took the very highest honours at the examination for the highest degree (the Han-lin or Doctor of Laws). The inscription on the arch records that the learned son of this learned father had, three years previously, attained to the self-same eminence!

Here then we see the system of Civil Service competitive examinations carried out to the bitter end, a system which for more than a thousand years has been the sole passport to all official employment, and no amount of experience in damaged brains and mental collapse brings one iota of relief to these many thousand victims. With us such competitions and such educational high pressure are comparatively a thing of yesterday, and yet we already know too much of the crying evil of overtaxed brains and prodigal waste of mental energy.

China has long anticipated the work of the school board, and at six years of age boys of all ranks are supposed to attend school, and prepare for their lifelong bondage to Confucius, by beginning their dreary struggle to master the characters which take the place of our alphabet, multiplied a thousandfold. They are taught to write each character separately on squares of lucky red paper, and by slow degrees they learn to pronounce each, while their little fingers learn to fashion the elaborate crabbed strokes.

Though these small students are just as merry and full of life as our schoolboys, they seem to take very kindly to the studies which they see their elders value so highly, nevertheless the cane is a fully recognised institution in every school, and is applied unsparingly, without respect of sex! As you pass outside of such a school (which is probably held within the precincts of some merchants' guild) you hear the hum of many voices all repeating lessons aloud, and if you look in you see a troop of quaint little shaven-headed chaps, with their long black plaits and blue clothes, sitting at small ornamental tables, very different from our school desks and benches, and suggesting a remarkable absence of the destructive element in these small Chinamen! Of course a conspicuous

feature in the school is the shrine of the tablet bearing the name of Confucius, to which each scholar must do daily homage.

Very probably another noteworthy object may be the schoolmaster's greatest treasure, his handsome coffin, the possession of which is so great a solace to his mind. He himself is probably one of the men who has passed in the lower examinations, but has failed in the higher ones. Each small boy in turn stands before him to repeat his allotted task of diluted classics (turning his back so as to avoid the possibility of peeping), and thenceforth until his life's end his dreams of ambition all flow in one channel—classics, classics, classics! In a Chinaman's catechism there could be but one answer to the question, "What is the chief end of man?" The only possible reply would be, "To attain to a perfect knowledge of Confucian classics."

The whole race are so entirely convinced that the highest pinnacle of perfection was attained by Confucius six hundred years before the Christian era, that from that time to the present every Chinaman has striven only to cherish that light of the past, and the idea of originating anything new is deemed worse than useless —it is sacrilegious! whatever is new is full of danger, and only things ancient are deemed worthy of reverence. Even where certain passages in the dry old classics are capable of double reading, only the orthodox interpretation is admissible, and the free-thinking student who should presume to suggest a possible meaning other than that of ancient commentators would come to utter grief.

So when small boys have mastered the requisite 'Thousand-character Classic' and the 'Book of Odes,' and other petrifactions, they are handed over to more advanced tutors, and attend courses of university lectures on the works of Mencius and other ancient Confucian sages, and in due course of time they are expected to pass in two local examinations.

Having succeeded in these, their names are then enrolled for a third—namely, the first of the great national examinations. These are held twice in three years, at every prefectoral city, and the degree which is conferred is called Sew-tsae, "adorned talent," and answers to that of B.A. at Oxford or Cambridge. Before being allowed to enter his name on the list, each candidate must produce a certificate to prove that he is a free-born subject of the realm, and of respectable parentage, *a limit which arbitrarily excludes not only the whole boating population, but also the children of the police, and all play-actors and slaves.*

To obtain this first degree is an honour immensely coveted even by men who do not aspire to further literary honours. In the first place, from the moment a man becomes a Sew-tsae, he is exempt from corporal punishment, which, in China, is no small advantage. Moreover, he can command the attention of any magistrate; and, in short, has an assured social position. So every one who possibly can do so, goes up for this examination, and although it is known that only sixty candidates can pass at a time, as many as six thousand names are sometimes entered for one province.

These numbers are, however, thinned by a preliminary examination, which occupies the first day. Three days are devoted to considering the six thousand papers, and only the men whose essays are approved are allowed to compete at the further examinations, which are then held at the prefect's official residence.

Just conceive what an impression of learning and exaggerated intellect must be produced by the appearance of such an assemblage of venerable-looking bald heads—the closely shaven forehead extending over half the skull! The majority of these faces are intellectual; many have delicate features; all are pale, beardless, and hairless. A very large proportion have strained their eyes with over-study of crabbed Chinese characters, so they wear enormous spectacles with very broad rims of tortoise-shell, which add greatly to their appearance of wisdom. We associate bald heads with old age, but this vast multitude ranges from eighteen to eighty years! Each successive examination thins the list of competitors, till at length there remain only about a hundred for the final effort.

The moment that the list of successful candidates is published, hawkers start in every direction with printed lists for sale, and swift, lightly built boats, each manned by half-a-dozen strong rowers, start off at full speed along every river and creek in the neighbourhood, to convey the news to anxious relations and fellow-citizens.

Here carrier-pigeons take the place of telegraphs; many of the students make their agreement long beforehand with the owners of the birds, so as to ensure their being trained at the right place, and brought thence in baskets by special messengers. (The Chinese are very kind to all birds, and these pigeons receive the greatest care, and are trained as special pets.) On the publication of the fortunate names, the lists are at once forwarded to these men, who inscribe the messages on slips of thin stiff paper; these they attach to the legs of the pigeons, who straightway start

on their homeward journey at the rate of about twenty-seven miles an hour, bearing the glad tidings to proud parents, and the towns which have given them birth rejoice exceedingly over the honour thus acquired. So when the newly made graduate returns home, he is received with enthusiasm, and is borne along in triumph to worship at the ancestral hall, and gladden his ancesters with the information of his success. But ere leaving the city the happy sixty (or ninety, as the case may be) assemble at the Court of the Literary Chancellor, there to be invested with the symbols of their new dignity. They are dressed in long tunics of bright blue, trimmed with black; these, being supplied at the cost of the student, are of silk or cotton, as may best suit his purse. All wear long black satin boots. The symbols of honour are wide bands of light red silk, worn across the back and chest, and hanging down in front in long ends. These are decorated with large red silk rosettes. A bright blue tippet richly embroidered with gold, and two sprays of gold and silver leaves, with little balls of red floss silk, to be worn on the extreme apex of the pointed hat, are the special gift of the Emperor. Therefore a very important feature of assuming the dress is, that all the candidates, headed by the Literary Chancellor, prostrate themselves, and perform the orthodox nine head-knockings before the Imperial tablet.

Many men having attained this honour are content, but those who aspire to obtain official employment must now prepare for the next degree, which is that of Keu-jin, "promoted man," and answers to our M.A. This examination is held only once in three years, in each provincial capital, in a great square enclosure, similar to the one I have described.

A whole month of dire anxiety must elapse ere the publication of the list, which is awaited with feverish anxiety not only by the relations of the competitors, but by all classes. The badge of honour now conferred is a more gorgeous tippet and a more beautiful golden flower, and the fortunate possessor of these is feasted and congratulated by all the authorities. When he returns home, the magistrates go forth in state to welcome him, presents (including sums of money) are showered upon him, rolls of perfumed paper are sent with a request that he will thereon inscribe a few words and his honourable autograph (in return for which further gifts are bestowed upon him), a name so creditable is inscribed on an ornamental board, and with much ceremony is hung up in the ancestral hall; moreover, his parents receive public

thanks from the civic authorities for having given birth to so talented a son.

Many are now content to rest on their oars, but those who seek further literary renown must come to Peking in the following year to be examined for the Tsin-sze or "advanced scholar" degree, which seems to answer to our LL.D. This is the examination held in the enclosure which we visited, and is conducted by the greatest scholars of the empire, including the Prime Minister and a prince of the Imperial race, otherwise it is much the same as the last. But the successful competitors are presented to the Emperor, and many honours are heaped upon them; and their names, inscribed on gilded tablets, are sent in chairs of state, together with many offerings, to the blissful parents.

The men themselves remain at Peking to compete for the highest possible literary degree—namely, that of Han-Lin, which is described as Literary Chancellor. It is held in the Imperial Palace, in the hall where the Emperor himself is supposed to expound the Confucian classics to his ministers. The Emperor presides on the present occasion, and the successful competitors are invited to dine with his Imperial Majesty, than which no higher honour can be conferred by earth or heaven. Curiously enough, each guest has a table to himself. From this happy company are selected all the highest officials of the empire, and also the examiners for all the provincial and minor examinations—truly a dreary life-work!

As we wandered round the dismal city of cells, the man in charge showed us one, just the same as all the others, which he told us had been occupied by one of the young Emperors when taking his degree. As the names of the writers of the papers are carefully concealed, we wondered by what means the examiners are ensured against such a terrible accident as failing to perceive the excellence of the Imperial essay! And yet the luckless examiner who is detected in showing favour to any man, or in receiving a bribe, is ignominiously put to death in the very undignified fashion which Jack the Giant-killer induced his giant to adopt!

We ascended to the summit of the three-storeyed building in the centre, whence we had a fine view of the city; and my attention was arrested by some extraordinary-looking objects erected on the City Wall. By the aid of my glasses I could discern dragons and hollow circles towering against the sky. These, Dr Edkins informed me, were the gigantic astronomical instruments of a great Observatory which was erected at the end of the seventeenth cen-

tury by a party of very learned Jesuit Fathers, who were sent with a letter of special commendation from Louis XIV. of France to instruct his Imperial Celestial brother, the Emperor Kang-hsi, in the sciences of mathematics and astronomy. This scientific embassy was received with all possible honour by the Son of Heaven and the astronomical and astrological fraternity, by whose reading of the stars all matters of Chinese or domestic life are regulated.

Strange to say, the Emperor so entirely recognised the superiority of the Western scientific instruments, that he discarded those in use, and bade the foreigners construct new ones on their own system. So they combined scientific use with Chinese decoration, and beautifully cast bronze dragons to support great astrolabes, armillary spheres, trigonometers, quadrants, astronomical circles, and other instruments, all of bronze. Amongst other objects is a huge celestial globe, the bronze surface of which is incrusted with golden stars to mark the constellations. All these are raised on a stone platform, higher than the wall, and enclosed by a strong iron railing.

Wishing for a nearer view, we made our way thither, but to our extreme disgust, on arriving at the gate by which we should have ascended on to the wall, we found it locked, and the man in charge dared not open it, having recently received strict official orders to the contrary. There was no doubt that he was speaking the truth, as he thereby lost his "tip," but the capricious prohibition was the more aggravating, as this gate is generally open.

As we were going away somewhat irritated, I discovered in a shady, sheltered spot beneath some pretty trees, two exceedingly curious groups of gigantic, purely native Chinese instruments of bronze in very fine bold casting, far more ancient and more interesting than those of the Jesuits, probably those which were discarded in favour of theirs. These were more fascinating, and I quickly settled down to sketch a magnificent astrolabe, which is a cluster of numerous gigantic circles, forming a sort of hollow ball, resting on a central pillar, and supported at the four corners by dragons rampant—a most picturesque object. While I was thus employed, Dr Edkins found occupation in measuring the other group and studying the degrees. Of course a little group soon assembled, but they were most respectful and kindly, and greatly interested by some small sketches of Ningpo which I chanced to have with me. So our afternoon ended most pleasantly.

Note—Progress in China.—Since these pages were penned, a new era has dawned for the great army of students in China. In the summer of 1887 the empire was electrified by the Imperial decision that henceforth the leading features of Western science shall be included in the list of subjects which candidates are required to master for the competitive examinations. Philosophy, mathematics, mechanics, engineering, naval and military tactics, marine artillery, torpedoes, international law and history, are now requisite, in addition to the former standard of literary proficiency; for it is expressly stated that no candidate can be selected unless he is a thorough master of literary composition. Apparently, therefore, no jot of the old Confucian learning may be omitted.

To take the edge off the innovation, the proclamation reminds the people that mathematics have been cultivated in China since B.C. 1120; that in after-times the sovereigns of successive dynasties have availed themselves of the help of mathematics from the West, and largely accepted Western science, and that consequently, in adding these subjects to their examination papers, they are only following out the traditions of their nation.

All this is true, seeing that they adopted the astronomical knowledge of Indian Buddhists, the mathematics introduced by Arabian Mohammedans, and the varied sciences taught by the Jesuit missionaries. At present there is a general craving for fresh knowledge, and a newly awakened recognition of the inadequacy of their own literature to enable the Chinese to meet other nations on equal terms. In its determination to overcome this deficiency, the Chinese Government has now established companies of translators in different parts of the empire, and each new book published in the Chinese language is eagerly devoured.

The new features in the competitive examinations will create an enormous demand for European books on all these subjects, which thus suddenly become a necessity for every aspirant to office in the empire.

Happily about four years ago (December 1884) a society was formed in Glasgow [1] which (recognising that the surest way to disarm the antagonism of the *literati* is the distribution of our best books on geography, history, and science) has actually been preparing for this very emergency, at the same time that it aims at the wide circulation of such Christian literature as may neutralise the poison of infidel books which have been so industriously cir-

[1] Book and Tract Society of China, 58 Bath Street, Glasgow.

culated in India and Japan, and will doubtless ere long appear in China also.

Another very remarkable step in the direction of progress is the recent establishment at Tien-tsin of five Training Colleges for the various departments of official work. These are—1, The Military College; 2, The Naval; 3, The Engineering; 4, The Electrical; and 5, The Medical College. All of these are under foreign superintendence; the text-books are in English, and the teaching is imparted in English.

A large preparatory school, capable of accommodating three hundred boarders, is also being built at Tien-tsin, in order to impart the rudiments of science and the elements of English to the students ere they are promoted to the higher colleges.

Furthermore, the Imperial Government has set aside a sum equal to £9000 a-year, in order to defray the travelling expenses of able men who are to be sent forth to study everything that may seem useful or important in every corner of the civilised world; each of these official travellers will be allowed about £45 a-month, besides the expenses of an interpreter. They are to draw up careful reports of all they see and learn.

CHAPTER XXXV.

BLIND MEN AND COLPORTEURS.

An earnest student—Preparation of books for the blind—Apt pupils—Further progress—Work among the blind in Japan—Colportage in Peking and elsewhere—Bookselling under difficulties.

June 8th.

Last night I had a most interesting glimpse of the very newest experiment among the many benevolent efforts which are being made by good Christians all over this country for various classes of the neglected poor. This is one which has never before been attempted, or, I should say, even dreamt of, in China—namely, teaching the blind to read and write.

Considering the frightful difficulty of acquiring these arts for men with full use of their eyes, the notion of initiating the blind into these mysteries might well stagger the most hopeful. Yet it has been accomplished and reduced to a system of marvellous

simplicity by Mr W. H. Murray, who last night introduced me to his first group of what I may term salvage from the slums of Peking.

We found them sitting together in a dark room, reading aloud, with unmistakable delight in their newly acquired talent.

It struck me as intensely pathetic (as we stood at the threshold of that dark room where, till a light was brought, I could distinguish nothing) to hear words which I knew to be those of the Chinese version of the Holy Scriptures, read by men and lads who, less than four months ago, sat begging in the streets in misery and rags, on the verge of starvation. Thence they were rescued by Mr Murray as suitable subjects for his first effort in aid of the great sightless legions of China, and already they have mastered the arts which in this land ensure the respect of all classes. To-night they read passages from both Old and New Testament with perfect facility, and a young lad wrote out for me a whole page of a Chinese classic, which to my eye and coarse touch, only presents groups of the neatest dots, wholly undistinguishable one from another, but which to the sensitive fingers of the blind seems to be as clear as a page of ordinary type would be to me.

But before I speak of the blind pupils, I must just tell you something of Mr Murray himself, for he is a "brither Scot" of the true type, which brings his country's name into good repute—a son whom the old country has good reason to hold in honour. As a specimen of what good can be accomplished by a resolute spirit resolved to conquer all difficulties, I think Mr Murray's career is as fine an example as any I have ever heard of.

William Murray (who was born at Port-Dundas, near Glasgow, the only son in a family of ten children) would, in the natural course of events, have adopted the profession of a saw-miller, but for an accident by which, when about nine years, he lost his left arm, while too fearlessly examining the machinery, and was thus disabled—an apparent calamity which was the first link in that chain of events leading up to a discovery which, if properly developed, may prove an incalculable boon to millions yet unborn in the Celestial Empire.

So soon as the lad was able to work for his living, he obtained employment as a rural letter-carrier in the neighbourhood of Glasgow. In this, however, the subject of Sunday work proved a serious difficulty, which he solved by giving up two shillings a-week of his scanty wages in order to be freed from an obligation against which his conscience revolted. His sacrifice, however, bore good fruit, for the earnest remonstrances of this young postman

proved the commencement of that widespread movement which has secured so large a measure of Sabbatical rest for his comrades in the service of the Post-Office.

His own longing was to obtain employment in some form of mission work, and again and again he applied to the National Bible Society of Scotland. But though greatly attracted by the lad, the secretary feared that one apparently so very simple and unassuming would fail to prove a successful colporteur, and having given up the secure service of the Post-Office, might be thrown, literally single-handed, on the world.

But as the same secretary now says, "What could he do against a man who was praying himself into the service of the Society?" For (though he himself knew nothing of this at that time) the young postman confided to him later how he divided his long daily walk into three parts, and as he tramped along the monotonous road, he beguiled a third of the distance by the study of the Holy Scriptures in the original Hebrew; the second beat was devoted to the Greek Testament; while the last section was reserved for daily prayer that GOD would vouchsafe to employ him in direct missionary work, and that he might be sent as a messenger of the GREAT KING to carry HIS glad tidings to some far-distant heathen land.

At last, when in 1864 he renewed his application to the Bible Society, his services were accepted, and he was commissioned to commence work among the ships congregated on the Clyde, and very soon the Society discovered that "it had never had such a colporteur" as the gentle being who made his way among the sailors of all nations, readily acquiring such scraps of divers tongues as enabled him to effect more sales of the Holy Scriptures in foreign languages than had been accomplished by any of his predecessors. And yet (like another, who, more than three thousand years ago, was called from the care of his father-in-law's flock to accomplish a great work) in his own mother tongue he is "not eloquent, but slow of speech."

This work amongst sailors was reserved for the winter months. In summer he was sent round wild districts in the Scottish Highlands, pushing his Bible-cart along many a lonely track of bleak moorland—a task which, on hilly roads, must often have needed all the strength of this willing but only one-armed colporteur, who all the time was longing to be employed in carrying the Word of Life to those to whom it was yet unknown.

Ere long, Murray's remarkable aptitude for languages attracted the notice of some of the directors of his Society. He was accord-

ingly permitted to attend classes at the Old College in the High Street (a friend helping him to pay his fees), provided his studies nowise interfered with his regular work. All day long, therefore, through the gloomy Glasgow winters, he stood in the streets beside his Bible-waggon, hurrying back to his lodgings for a hasty supper; then studying till bedtime at 9 P.M., and rising daily on the chill wintry mornings at 3 A.M. (only think of the physical misery involved in turning out regularly at such an hour!) in order to prepare for his classes at college from 8 till 10 A.M., at which hour he began a new day's work of street-bookselling.

At length his seven years' apprenticeship as a home colporteur were fulfilled, and in 1871 he obtained his heart's desire, and sailed for China, where it was arranged that he should remain six months at Chefoo, engaged in the bewildering task of learning to recognise at sight the 4000 intricate characters by which the Chinese language is represented on paper.

The same aptitude for mastering crabbed symbols which had facilitated his study of Greek and Hebrew, enabled this diligent student to acquire about 2000 Chinese characters in four months, when he started on his first pioneer journey to visit a city about 250 miles in the interior of the province of Shangtu. He invented a rude litter slung between four mules as the most convenient method of carrying his books, and thus made his way safely along precipitous mountain-roads, facing bitter cold and many difficulties, but sustained through all discouragements by occasional gleams of great promise.

Some of the incidents of travel were certainly rather startling just at first,—as, for instance, when, on reaching a miserable rest-house, wherein men and mules together sought shelter from the pitiless storm, he was guided through the dense smoke to the only "reserved" sleeping berth—the post of honour—which proved to be the coffin which the host was cherishing for his own eventual use,—the filial and most acceptable gift of his dutiful sons!

One of the first things which deeply impressed him (as it must impress every traveller who looks around him in the densely thronged streets of Chinese cities), was the extraordinary number of blind men who mingle in every crowd, frequently in companies of eight or ten, clamouring for alms, each guided by the man in front of him, the foremost feeling his way with a long stick—"blind leader of the blind."

This very large proportion of blindness[1] is due to several causes,

[1] I think that we—the greatly blessed "sighted people," as the blind call us—

such as leprosy, smallpox, neglected ophthalmia, and general dirt, to which, in great tracts of North China, we must add the stifling dust and penetrative smoke caused by the necessity of using turf-sods and sun-dried grass to heat the ovens, owing to the lack of better fuel.

For unnumbered centuries these blind legions have dragged through their darkened dreary lives, a burden to themselves and to all around them. As a class, they are the most disreputable of the community—so bad that even a hopeful soul like their friend Mr Murray is compelled to admit that the majority appear incorrigible; indeed the night-refuge, where they chiefly congregate in Peking, bears so vile a character that he himself has never ventured to cross its threshold. All his hopes, therefore, rest on training young lads, and, so far as possible, isolating them from their seniors.

Of course, in this sweeping classification of the adult blind, there is room for many bright exceptions; and indeed the first thing which suggested to Mr Murray his present work was the fact that amongst the crowds who, with true Chinese reverence for all written characters, pressed forward to purchase the copies or portions of Holy Scripture which he offered for sale at a very cheap rate, many blind men came desiring to purchase 'The Christian Classics'; and when he asked why they wanted a book which they could not see to read, they replied that they would keep it, and that perhaps friends who could read would sometimes let them hear it. Then he would tell them how in Europe the blind are taught to read and even to write; but this they never could believe, so utterly incredible did it appear that any one should learn to read with his fingers. Of course, no amount of embossing could

scarcely realise how terribly numerous a proportion of mankind are not thus gifted. If in favoured England, where there are no circumstances adverse to sight, there are between thirty and forty thousand persons positively blind, to say nothing of the multitude whose sight is seriously defective—what must be the sum of blindness in the whole world? In England, although not more than three thousand are provided for in asylums, a blind person is a comparatively rare object—in Egypt or China you meet him at every turn. If, then, you consider that England is just about as large as the smallest of the eighteen provinces of China, you may obtain some notion of the uncared-for multitude who there walk in most literal darkness.

There is, however, reason to hope that since the Chinese have taken up vaccination so systematically, the very large number whose blindness is due to the ravages of smallpox will be seriously diminished. We know that in France, prior to the introduction of vaccination, 35 per cent of the total blindness was due to this cause. A few years later this proportion was reduced to 7 per cent. In China, however, neglected ophthalmia is responsible for a very great share of national blindness.

Curiously enough, colour-blindness, so common amongst ourselves, seems to be here unknown.

make the frightfully complicated Chinese character comprehensible to the most sensitive fingers, but Mr Murray soon saw that something simpler might be devised, and this thought became ever present to his mind.

When he spoke to other Europeans of his longing to do something to cheer these darkened lives, they very naturally replied, "The Christian missionaries of all Protestant denominations put together are in the proportion of one to one million of the population. How can we undertake any additional work?" Failing to awaken human sympathy, his soul was the more ceaselessly absorbed in prayer that some means might be revealed to him whereby he might help these poor neglected sufferers.

Ere leaving Scotland, he had mastered Professor Melville Bell's system of visible speech for the instruction of the deaf. This he found so greatly facilitated his own study of this very difficult language, that he has prepared a pamphlet on the subject, for the use of all foreign students. His first care was to note down the value of every sound he mastered, and he had the satisfaction of proving that these do not exceed about 408 (a very fair number, we must allow!) It now occurred to him that all these might be reduced to symbolic forms for the use of the blind, and he went so far as to have these made in clay and baked, so that they could be handled. From these some blind pupils actually learnt to read. But this system was cumbersome and unsatisfactory—all the more so as it occurred to the teacher that as the Chinese adore their own written hieroglyphic characters, they would probably render divine honour to these clay symbols!

Moreover, during his residence in Glasgow, his interest had been so deeply aroused by seeing blind persons coming to purchase books prepared for their use, that he had set himself to master both Moon's system of embossed alphabetic symbols and also Braille's system of embossed dots. Never was there a better proof of the advantage of acquiring any sort of useful knowledge even when there seems no present reason for doing so. Now Mr Murray ceaselessly revolved in his own mind whether it might be possible to adapt one or other of these to the bewildering intricacies of the Chinese language, with all its perplexing "tones," which, by an almost inappreciable difference of pronunciation, cause one word to convey a dozen different meanings.

Such was the perplexing problem with which this would-be benefactor of the blind wrestled, apparently without result, till one day, wearied with a long morning's work of bookselling in the

crowded street, he had lain down to rest awhile during the noon-day heat, with closed eyes, as if asleep, when suddenly, as clearly as he now sees one of his own stereotyped books, he saw outspread before him the whole system which he has since then so patiently and ingeniously worked out; and moreover, at once perceived with thankful joy, that by this system Chinese sounds could be rendered so accurately, that whereas to a sighted person learning to read or write Chinese by the ordinary method, it is the most bewildering of all languages, it would by this means become one of the easiest to acquire.

In this vision (or revelation, as he believes it to have been—an opinion which I think few Christians will gainsay) he perceived that, as the Chinese know nothing of alphabetic symbols, he must discard all attempts to produce any alphabetic system, but must make use of numerals by which to represent the 408 distinct syllables which he found sufficient to replace the 4000 characters used in ordinary Chinese type. To represent these numerals, he decided that instead of using figures, he must substitute mnemonic letters—*e.g.*, T or D for 1, N to represent 2, M for 3, R for 4, L for 5, Sh for 6, K for 7, F or V for 8, B or P for 9, S for 0.

Furthermore, he contrived that every Chinese word, no matter what its length, should be represented by only three symbols—units, tens, and hundreds—and for these he has arranged embossed dots grouped on Braille's system, which he adopted in preference to Moon's alphabetic system, the latter not being adapted to writing, or to represent music, which is one of the most marked features in Mr Murray's system of training.

If all this sounds to you utterly incomprehensible, I can only say that it is equally so to myself; but daily experience now proves it to be so extraordinarily simple to the Chinese intellect, that any blind lad of average intelligence can thoroughly acquire the arts of both reading and writing within two months, and a sharp lad can do this in six weeks!

It must not be inferred that Mr Murray's vision at once brought him to the desired haven in regard to its practical application. But the inspiration thus received was as a chart by which he was enabled carefully to work his way through a thousand perplexities, a labour of love to which he devoted every hour that he could steal from sleep or rest, through eight long years. For, deeming himself bound to devote every moment of the day to direct work for the Bible Society, it was only after "business hours" that he allowed himself to work out the details of this, his special interest.

Yet there was good even in this delay, for had he not so thoroughly won the confidence of the people by his constant intercourse with them while Bible-selling in the streets, they would assuredly have attributed the whole work to magic, and thus irreparable harm would have been done. As it was, many even of the adult Christians find this reading with finger-tips so incomprehensible, that they can scarcely believe that it is not accomplished by clever jugglery—a sort of sleight of hand.

At last Mr Murray had so far arranged his system that he determined to try whether it could be acquired by a poor old blind man, "Mr Wang," who was crippled with rheumatism, and like to die of want. He provided the old man with such creature-comforts as ensured a quiet mind, and then, with the aid of a native colporteur, commenced teaching him, and soon, to the unspeakable joy of both pupil and teacher, the poor rheumatic fingers learned to discriminate the dots, and the blind man was able to read the Holy Word for himself.

Just then another blind man, upwards of forty years of age, was brought to Dr Dudgeon, having been severely kicked by a mule which he had inadvertently approached, his long guiding-stick passing between its legs. This man was induced to beguile the hours of suffering by this new study. He proved an apt pupil, and though his finger-tips were roughened by age and work, he could read well within two months.

The next pupil was a poor lad who had become blind, and who, having no one to provide for him, had *literally been thrown into a dung-heap and there left to die.* He was found by a man who had known his father, and said he was a good man, and that it was a pity to leave the lad to perish; so having heard of the foreign bookseller's extraordinary care for the blind, he actually resolved to risk the expense of hiring a cart, and brought the poor starving boy to Mr Murray's lodgings, begging him to try and save him. Three months of careful nursing, with good food and needful drugs, restored him to health, and he soon was overjoyed by finding himself able to acquire the honoured arts of reading and writing.

Mr Murray next selected a little orphan blind beggar, whom he often observed lying almost naked in the streets in the bitter cold of winter, without any relations to take care of him. He was attracted by the boy's cheerful contentment in his loneliness and poverty, and by the fact that he was free from the taint of leprosy, which is terribly prevalent among the miserable beggar population. So he took this lad in hand, washed and clothed him, and under-

took to feed and lodge him, provided he would apply himself in earnest to mastering this new learning. Considering the honour which in China attaches to all literary pursuits, the boy was delighted, as well he might be. But only conceive his ecstasy, and the thankful gladness of his master, when, *within six weeks*, he was able not only to read fluently, but to write with remarkable accuracy. Moreover, this simpler writing is much more rapid than that in ordinary use, and these blind students can write on an average twenty-two words per minute.

When you consider that a man with the full use of all his faculties takes years—in some cases as much as twenty years—of hard study to acquire a similar mastery of the ordinary Chinese characters, you cannot wonder that those who knew this wretched beggar lad two months ago can scarcely be persuaded that this result is not supernatural. One of these men, who is already a Christian, hopes to become useful as an assistant colporteur by attracting the interest of the crowds; but even the others, who are not Christians, are so delighted with their new power that they lose no chance of reading the Scriptures to whoever will listen to them,—so evidently the knowledge of Christian truth might be widely spread by the agency of a multitude of blind readers.

Note.—By a very singular coincidence (considering for how many centuries the blind of China and Japan have been left uncared for), a very similar effort for their weal was commenced in Japan in 1876, by Mr Goble, an American, himself a sufferer from defective sight, who, though he had never seen or touched a book printed for the use of the blind, worked out for himself a method of printing on wooden blocks, in Roman letters—a system conveying an impression of all the sounds in the Japanese language spelt phonetically. In this he printed a small book for the use of his fellow-sufferers, and found to his joy that blind boys could learn to read it with far less trouble and toil than their seeing brethren could learn to read the difficult Chinese character in which Japanese books are printed. One of his pupils was a lad of eighteen, who had been blind since he was three years old. Within two weeks from the day when he received the phonetic alphabet, he had mastered the whole book!

This process of printing was, however, so cumbersome, that Mr Goble appealed to all European institutions for the blind to help him in improving it, that he might be able to scatter educational books among the blind all over Japan. It is needless to say that

such a suggestion was not unheeded, and after some study Mr Lilley and Dr Faulds devised a system which is found to work admirably. The Gospel of St Mark was first prepared in raised letters, and the labour of printing was facilitated by the gift of an "Ullmar embossing-press" from a sympathetic citizen of Paisley. Now, classes for teaching the blind have been formed at Yokohama and Mishima, and the ease with which they acquire the art of reading surpasses all expectation.

With regard to Mr Murray's effort on behalf of the blind in Peking, for eight more years he continued to work on, almost unknown, elaborating the details of his system, and training as many pupils as he could feed and teach. The development of his scheme has, however, been seriously impeded by lack both of time and of funds. Not only did he deem himself bound to devote all his hours of recognised work to street-preaching and bookselling, but his pecuniary resources were limited to his own slender salary, which has all along been taxed to the uttermost in order to provide board, lodging, and raiment for his indigent blind students. (For even a frugal Chinaman cannot be respectably clothed and fed for less than £10 a-year.) And yet, when one poor helpless waif after another seemed thrown upon his hands, he felt that it was impossible to reject those so manifestly intrusted to his care, and so the modest income supposed to suffice for one man has been made to feed and clothe a dozen.

Most of these pupils have turned out highly satisfactory, but of course there are some disappointments. Sad to say, Sheng, the first boy taught, whose prospects seemed so hopeful, was tempted, just for one day, to rejoin his former associates, that he might display his various attainments. Yielding to the temptations held out by a wandering blind minstrel, he absented himself for some time, and when at length he returned, expressing much contrition, he was found to have suffered such complete moral shipwreck, that for the sake of the others his expulsion became necessary—a very bitter sorrow to the patient friend who had so rejoiced over his early promise.

On the other hand, Mr Murray has had the joy of seeing several successive sets of blind students not only rejoicing in their own precious gifts, but becoming really valuable mission-workers as readers, preachers, and organists in various chapels. One was found to be endowed with talents which seemed so specially to fit him for the ministry, that he was transferred to a training-college

at Tien-tsin, where candidates are prepared for holy orders; and it is probable that another, who has recently arrived from Manchuria, will follow suit. Of course, tidings of the wonderful gift thus offered to the blind has brought some who, being able to maintain themselves, have come as self-supporting pupils. Two or three have travelled several hundred miles to place themselves under Mr Murray's tuition.

He finds that the majority of his pupils are endowed with a marked faculty for music; and though when left to themselves they naturally indulge in the horrible caterwauling which passes for music in the Celestial Empire, they very easily acquire European tunes, and not only pick up a new air very rapidly, but remember it accurately—a very important qualification for all engaged in pioneer mission-work, in which the value of singing, as the handmaid of preaching, is being more and more fully recognised in all parts of the world.

Now here is another marked advantage of Mr Murray's ingenious adaptation of Braille's system. So marvellously does it lend itself to the representation of sound, that he has found no difficulty in thereby expressing all musical notes and terms in the study of harmony (which indeed had already been done in Europe, where a considerable musical literature has therein been prepared for the blind of various nations).

The students in the humble school at Peking now write out musical scores from dictation with wonderful accuracy. In about fifteen minutes they produce a perfect score—perhaps one of Sankey's hymns with all its parts. Then with great pleasure to themselves they pick out the tunes on the piano, harmonium, or American organ—beginners being taught by having the embossed symbol pasted on to each note, so then each student reads the written score with one hand, while with the other he finds out the notes.

Having thus mastered the tunes, the blind organist and choir sing their Christian lyrics in the chapel, which is open to all comers; and when a good congregation has assembled, attracted by the music, one of the students, who is a very gifted scholar, addresses the people, and at the close of his exhortation, recommends all present to purchase copies of the Holy Scriptures, that they may study it for themselves, and at the close of the day the sales by this blind lad are often found to have been larger than those by Mr Murray himself. Indeed, the latter says that it is largely owing to this lad's preaching and singing that it has been found necessary to pull down the old chapel and build a much larger one.

One of the blind men who was first trained, was sent out to accompany a native colporteur, and to read the Scriptures aloud while his companion sold his books. One day he had the satisfaction of bringing to Mr Murray a letter from one of the Imperial princes praising the good work done by the Bible Society, and requesting that a copy of every book they had to sell should be sent to him, and that Mr Murray should come in person to explain them. The books proved a good donkey-load, but all were received with thanks and paid for, and some are known to have gained admission within the Palace itself. Two sets have been purchased by a eunuch of the Emperor's household, that he and a friend might read them aloud in company.

Another of the early students was a very intelligent young man who retained his sight till he was twenty. He rapidly acquired the blind system of reading and writing, and then set to work to stereotype an embossed Gospel of St Matthew in classical Mandarin Chinese, which is the *lingua franca* understood by all educated men throughout the empire.

But the colloquial language of the illiterate people varies in every province, and the dialects spoken between Canton and Peking are so different as to necessitate the publication of at least eight different translations of the Bible for the use of sighted persons. Hence it is evident that all these must be reduced to the dot system ere the blind beggars of the central and southern provinces can share the privilege already open to those of North China, which now possesses five Books of the Bible and some small books on sacred subjects; also a considerable number of music-books.

The Peking school also possesses many other embossed books in manuscript; and both these, and those stereotyped for the use of all fellow-sufferers, will rapidly increase, for Mr Murray has taught his pupils to do every part of the preparation of books for the blind, even to the embossed stereotyping, which, by a very ingenious mechanical contrivance of his own invention, they are able to do so rapidly, and with such accuracy, that any one of these lads can with ease prepare considerably more work than three men in England will turn out in the same time, and will also do it more accurately and at a far cheaper rate. A London workman endowed with sight considers three pages of stereotyping to be a good day's work; a Chinese lad will easily produce ten pages a-day.

So now the blind of China, who have hitherto been a class of

cruelly neglected outcasts, are learning that a door of hope is open to them, and that a course of true usefulness may be theirs. From the singular reverence of the Chinese for all written characters, and for those who can read them, it is evident that a blind reader there occupies a very different position from that of the men whom we are accustomed to see in our streets. I know of no agency which is more surely destined to work among the masses, as an ever-spreading leaven of all good, than this training of blind Scripture-readers, who year by year may be sent forth from this school to read the Sacred Message in the streets of Peking and other great centres of heathenism, holding forth to others the LIGHT which has gladdened their own lives.

This new Mission will certainly appeal, as no other has yet done, to two of the strongest characteristics of China's millions—namely, *their reverence for pure benevolence, and their veneration for the power of reading.* To see foreigners undertaking such a work of love for the destitute blind, will go far towards dispelling prejudice against Christians and their MASTER, and will prepare the way for the workers of all Christian Missions.

It is much to be desired that these should send agents—either Europeans or carefully selected Chinese converts—to be trained by Mr Murray, that they may carry his system to every existing mission-station. One such SIGHTED head-teacher in each district could there found a Blind School and train Chinese Scripture-readers, and thus the work may be ceaselessly extended in every direction, till it overspreads the whole vast empire like a network.

Probably the very strongest point in favour of this Mission to the blind, is its bearing on the admission of Christian influence into the dreary homes wherein about 150,000,000 Chinese women of all ages live their monotonous lives in strict seclusion. Some of these patriarchal households number from sixty to a hundred women. Of course, with the exception of the very few foreign ladies who have been able to make themselves acceptable to their Chinese sisters, no direct missionary influence has been allowed to find entrance within these jealously guarded homes.

Now it is evident that each blind woman who can be taught to read the Holy Scriptures, will readily obtain access to some of these secluded homes, where she will certainly be a centre of unbounded interest, and may become a living power. Sooner or later, her words will impress many, and thus the truth will make its way insensibly amongst the mothers, who exercise such life-long influence over their sons—an influence now bitterly antagon-

istic to Christianity, on account of its enmity to that worship and propitiation of the dead which is the main principle of Chinese life. Ancestral worship is a big and powerful giant; but as weak things of the earth are so often chosen to confound the mighty, there is good reason to believe that these humble blind readers are destined to prove powerful agents in the fight, and in undermining this citadel.

Owing to Chinese prejudice on this subject, Mr Murray was effectually debarred from teaching blind women, with one exception —namely, that of a handsome young married woman who lost her sight shortly before her wedding. Both bride and bridegroom are Christians, and received their education at the American Mission. Hence the husband's consent to his wife being taught. In a few months, to her great joy, she mastered the mysteries of reading, writing, and music.

It is pleasant to learn that when, after a brief visit to Scotland, Mr Murray returned to China as a married man, this blind woman, with full consent of her husband and his mother, came to crave further training, to fit her for regular evangelistic work amongst her countrywomen. It is hoped that her example may be followed by European and American ladies, and that these may be induced to study the system which would enable them to bring such blessing to their sisters who so literally "sit in darkness."

Now, may I venture to add that practical evidence of sympathy, in the form of donations in aid of this very promising young Mission, will be gladly welcomed by Messrs Honeyman & Drummond, Chartered Accountants, 58 Bath Street, Glasgow. I would cordially entreat all who have already helped it, not to allow their interest in the subject to flag, but on the contrary, to do all in their power to awaken that of others; for though I am fully convinced that this Blind Agency is destined to do a very great work in China, it is as yet only a baby-giant, and stands greatly in need of the care of as many nursing-mothers as possible (in the way of collectors).

Mr Murray's work has only just come to the surface sufficiently to claim public recognition. Hitherto the little acorn which he has planted has been quietly germinating in the heart of the Chinese capital, known only to a handful of poor blind men, and scarcely recognised even by the little group of foreign residents in that great city; and though there is every prospect that it will assuredly develop into a wide-spreading tree of healing and of knowledge, destined to overshadow the whole land with its

beneficent influence, it is as yet but a feeble sapling, whose growth, humanly speaking, depends upon the fostering care of the Christian public.

SURELY SUCH A STORY AS THIS MAY WELL INCITE MANY TO PROVE THEIR INTEREST BY SOME ACT OF SELF-DENIAL WHICH MAY ENABLE THEM TO HELP SO EARNEST A WORKER. (For we all know how very apt we are to limit our giving power to such a sum as we can spare without seriously missing it!)

Would that some who read these lines would consider for a moment what life would be to themselves were they deprived of gifts so precious as SIGHT and LIGHT, and would each resolve to present for this branch of GOD'S work such a sum as he shall really miss—as a special thank-offering for these precious gifts,—a portion of that money-talent which we know we only hold in trust, as we so often need to remind ourselves when we say, "Both riches and honour come of THEE, and of THINE own do we give THEE"!

I cannot conclude this reference to Mr Murray's voluntary work among the blind without a few words concerning the main object of his official work. He is, as I have said, one of the colporteurs sent out by the National Bible Society of Scotland to endeavour to circulate the Scriptures among China's millions.

The effort, which at first was attended with manifold discouragements, has gradually gained ground, and thanks to a happy combination of patient gentleness with most resolute determination, Mr Murray and his pony-cart are now ranked among the recognised "institutions" of the capital. Wherever there is a chance of effecting a sale, there he takes up his post, no matter at what inconvenience. At the gate of the Examination Hall he stands, while the students from every corner of the empire come forth after their labours, and thus in one day about 700 volumes, each containing a gospel and four epistles, are disposed of. Another day he takes his stand on the bridge at the entrance to the Imperial city—the busiest place in Peking, where "all under heaven" pass and repass. Here in one day he sells upwards of a hundred books, and knows that they will travel thence to Corea, Mongolia, and the remotest parts of China.

Not that sales are always so frequent. On one bitterly cold day, with a blinding dust-storm blowing so that he could scarcely stand, he stood for hours, waiting on the chance of one customer. But at last there came a Mongol chief, followed by a servant carrying strings of money over his arm. He bought a copy of every

Mongolian book in stock, and the patient seller was well satisfied with that day's work. Another day there came a Lama in gorgeous vestments, who bought a copy of the Christian Testament, an example which was at once followed by some Corean bystanders, —so those books were destined to travel far afield.

But a really remarkable thing is, that the priests of the largest Imperial Lama temple in Peking have actually allowed him, on payment of a trifling sum, to rent space for a bookstall within the temple!! He could scarcely at first believe that they were in earnest, yet so it proved; and now on several days in the week Christian books are freely sold in the Lama temple!

Mr Murray has further extended his "connection" by a Bible-selling journey through Mongolia. Hiring a large Mongolian cart, drawn by a horse and an ox, he discovered that his driver was a Lama priest, who thus became instrumental in carrying the new doctrine into his own camp. One of the earliest customers was another Lama, who came desiring to purchase "the whole classic of Jesus"; and having obtained it, he hurried off to his tent, there to commence his studies without delay, while to the bringer of good tidings he sent a patriarchial gift—a dish of milk, a large bowl of cream, and a cheese.

Arriving at Dolonov, the Mecca of the Lamas, just at the most sacred season of pilgrimage, bookselling became a most flourishing business, and in three days 2000 Chinese Gospels and more than a hundredweight of the Scriptures in Mongolian were disposed of to Chinamen, Mongols, and Mohammedans, thus securing their distribution over vast tracts of country.

Even where the book sold fails to interest the purchasers, it by no means follows that it is lost. For instance, among the men who have come to crave further teaching concerning "the way of life," one was questioned as to how he had obtained his Christian books. He replied that he had bought them from an old woman who was selling them as waste-paper! Some men buy every book that is published, and study them all. One such bought no less than ninety books and tracts from Dr Edkins, and by the time he had got through them all, he was so thoroughly convinced of the folly of idol-worship that he pronounced sentence of death on the whole regiment of his domestic idols, numbering nearly a hundred, and representing a ton-weight of copper!

That the books are not only bought, but also read, is a certainty of which there have been innumerable practical proofs, from the number of isolated cases in which men have come from remote

districts (or have there been found by itinerant missionaries), having actually given up idolatry and become practical Christians, without having come in contact with any human teacher. Some have even gone further, and have dared to declare to friends and neighbours the truths that have dawned on their own minds. As one instance among many, I may cite one village in the province of Hunan, in which ten men, including an old "literary" man (usually the most bigoted), had given up idolatry and were anxious to receive baptism, their sole teaching having been from the written page.

To this last cause is due a recent important step in Mr Murray's career. In the course of some of his Bible-selling expeditions in remote districts, he has on several occasions been visited by unmistakably genuine converts, who had become so solely from reading the written Word, perhaps accompanied by some teaching from another convert. They have come to him asking for Christian baptism, although fully realising all the persecution that would probably ensue. It was most painful to have to explain to such earnest seekers that he was not qualified to bestow the gift they desired, especially as it was more than probable that they might never again come in contact with any foreign missionary. Mr Murray therefore resolved that on his return to Scotland he would ascertain whether any branch of the Christian Church could dispense with the usual lengthy course of theological training, and grant him ordination after less than a year of special study. Finding that the United Presbyterian College in Edinburgh might possibly do so under the circumstances, he entered himself as a Divinity student, and absorbed himself in the close study of theology, Greek, and Hebrew, as a pleasant relaxation from the various Chinese and Tartar dialects in which he had been steeped for the previous sixteen years.

It is pleasant to learn that the merits of this earnest student were so fully recognised that, probably for the first time, eminent representatives of the three battalions of the Presbyterian Regiment of the Grand Army took part in his ordination—the venerable Dr Andrew Bonar of the Free Church, and the Rev. Dr J. Elder Cumming of the Established Church, having gladly accepted the invitation of the United Presbyterian Synod to assist in the service, which was held in the Berkeley Street Church, Glasgow, on the evening of the 23d June 1887.

On his return to Peking as the Rev. W. H. Murray, arrangements were made to enable him henceforth to devote half his time

exclusively to preparing the Holy Scriptures and other books for the use of the blind, and otherwise developing his system. By his own wish, however, the other half of his time must, as heretofore, be devoted to street-preaching and bookselling, in order to retain the confidence and sympathy of the people, and avert the very real danger of their attributing his work to magic.

The work of the colporteurs in China is generally by no means a rose-strewn path, or at any rate the roses are beset with abundant thorns! Their work has not much in common with that of the British bookseller, nor does the comfortable Briton who "sits at home at ease," and does his share of mission-work by occasionally writing a small cheque, often realise the amount of physical and mental endurance which the Christian bookseller in China has to undergo in disposing of his wares.

The country to be traversed is so vast, and the characteristics of the people and of their surroundings are so varied, that there is, of course, room for every conceivable experience. Occasionally it is smooth sailing, and the booksellers are the most popular men of the day, and perhaps within a few hours they reach another city from which they barely escape with their lives. Sometimes they have to travel or stand for hours in a blazing sun which might make them long for Jonah's gourd, and ere they return to headquarters the land is all ice-bound, and they are wellnigh frozen. Sometimes they must toil along difficult mountain-tracts, crossing rickety bamboo swinging bridges, which sorely try the nerves of heavily laden book coolies. At other times the only path is up the boulder-strewn bed of some mountain-torrent.

Just to glance at one example. There is Mr Archibald, the Bible Society's Pioneer Agent in the province of Hunan, with its 25,000,000 inhabitants. He commenced work there in 1879, following the course of three great rivers, accompanied sometimes by Mr Wood, sometimes by Mr Paton, both of the Church of Scotland Mission. They visited eight walled cities and about thirty towns in the southern province; and notwithstanding the obstructions laid in their way by the mandarins, the hostility of the gentry and scholars, the excitement and tumult of the people, threats, imprecations, insults, and annoyances of every description, they contrived to dispose of about 12,000 books and portions of Scriptures, and about as many tracts. Finally they were mobbed, stoned, and driven away from the capital, narrowly escaping with their lives.

But soon afterwards they had the joy of learning that in two villages within forty miles of the great city of Hankow the shrines

of the gods had been abolished, the idols thrown into the ponds, houses opened for Christian worship, and twenty candidates desired baptism. All this had been brought about by the agency of native Christians who had come to visit their friends, and took the opportunity of preaching from house to house. So at the New Year, instead of writing the customary extracts from the classics on the doorposts and lintels, these houses were adorned with verses concerning "Jesu's holy doctrine."

Another journey was to the famous potteries in the province of Kiang-si. This time Mr Archibald was accompanied by a clergyman from Hankow, the Rev. G. John. Crossing a great lake and ascending a fine river, they reached a city in the hills, where the smoke of factories reminded them of England's midland counties. Here they were enthusiastically welcomed, and conducted to the court of a great temple, where eager crowds pressed around them, proffering their money faster than it could be counted, in their anxiety to secure books. It was actually necessary to limit the sales, lest the supply should be too soon exhausted. Meanwhile Mr John preached at intervals from the temple platform to a most attentive audience, numbering many thousands.

Thence they proceeded across cultivated plains abounding in fragrant orange-groves, and over hills covered with tea-plantations, a journey covering upwards of a thousand miles, and whether received ill or well, the travellers contrived to hold some intercourse with the people at almost every town and village.

Winter came on suddenly. They had to abandon their inland expedition with their wheelbarrows, and return to the river, down which they travelled in a snowstorm till they reached the city of Siang-Tan, on approaching which they were mobbed and compelled to seek safety by anchoring in mid-stream. Thence, however, they were soon dislodged. To quote Mr Archibald's own words, "We soon saw a small gunboat coming towards us, laden with suspicious-looking buckets and ladles, and manned by a crew of rowdies. One of the most precious things in China is night-soil, which, carefully collected in buckets, is sold for manure. A cargo of such ammunition had our enemies laid in, and with this they were now coming to attack us!! Cursing we can endure; brickbats and stones are trifles; we might in case of need face cannon-balls and torpedoes—but this was too much. We turned tail and fled ignominiously!"

At Chang-sha they were conquered in a more dignified manner. Instead of a "filth-boat," no less than six gunboats were ordered

out and ranged along the shore to prevent the sellers of foreign books from effecting a landing. It appears that the *literati* of this place are so desperately antagonistic to all foreigners, that they have even boycotted the relations of Marquis Tseng, the Chinese ambassador to Britain, to mark their disapproval of his friendliness to the barbarians!

And yet at other places on the same river, the welcome to the strangers was so enthusiastic as to become embarrassing. They were most literally obeying THE MASTER'S command to His disciples: "*When they persecute you in one city, flee ye to another.*" In the present instance they left the main river, and took a small boat up a branch stream till they reached a town. No sooner was their approach known, than most of the inhabitants came out to meet them, led by a mandarin, who said that many years ago he had seen the Christian books, and he exhorted the people to buy them, as they would certainly increase their intelligence and virtue. So here the demand exceeded the available supply.

At another town[1] an immense crowd had assembled to receive them, every man shouting at the pitch of his voice, and as the boat touched the bank, a number of men rushed into the water, and carried the whole concern—boat, books, and sellers—right ashore, and deposited them high and dry on the land. It was rather a nervous moment for the individuals thus honoured, who could not be sure whether they were to be torn in pieces in anger, or worshipped as foreign gods! However, it proved to be all right, and the difficulty was to supply the impatient multitude, all struggling to be first in purchasing the coveted books—hundreds of voices were clamouring at once. In the endeavour to lessen the demand, prices were suddenly raised, but it was of no use—as long as a book was to be had, the determined struggle continued, and all were ready to pay whatever was asked.

When no books remained, some officials invited Mr Archibald to go into the city. He protested that with such a crowd it would be impossible, but they insisted, going slowly to allow the pedlars to clear away their stalls, which would certainly have been overturned by the throng. At last they came to an open space round the temple of the city god, and there they halted, listening eagerly while their visitor gave them a summary of the "doctrine," talking till he could talk no longer.

A few such instances as these give some idea of the risks and anxieties of a colporteur's life, to which must be added the fre-

[1] Yan Shien.

quent exposure to close contact with cases of virulent and highly contagious ophthalmia, smallpox, and leprosy.

Even when the people are friendly, the actual difficulties of travel are sometimes no light matter.

Just to glance at the experiences of one other willing worker—Mr Burnet. When in a remote district, his boat sprang a leak in crossing the rapids, grievously damaging his stock. Thieves contrived to cut their way through the planks of his junk and rob him of all his clothes and money. Next he was caught in a typhoon, the junk was capsized, and all swam for their lives. His native assistant was dragged out of the water by his pigtail—the boatman's child was drowned, and the survivors were left stranded on the shore in the pitiless storm. Naturally this resulted in severe fever.

In a subsequent journey he was again stricken with fever, when near a town never before entered by a foreigner. Of course inquisitive crowds assembled, longing to see him, and so soon as he could drag himself to his feet large sales of books were effected. If you could realise the miserable dirt and discomfort of even an average Chinese inn, you might possibly be able to imagine the wretchedness of being laid up in such a place, alone and untended.

When sufficiently convalescent to start on the return journey to Hankow, winter suddenly set in, and for more than a week Mr Burnet and his caravan of wheelbarrows were detained at a most miserable roadside inn, like a very inferior British cow-byre, where only by diligently pacing up and down the narrow floor could he keep his blood in circulation, while the bitter north wind blew freely through doorless and windowless openings.

Even when at length it was possible to proceed, the barrow-men made slow progress over blocks of mud frozen hard as iron, and moreover, could only travel at all in the early mornings before the sun had turned the whole into a sea of slush. Two rivers covered with floating ice had to be crossed, and then a mountainous district where the roads were worse than the last, being seamed with ruts three feet deep, filled with mud and ice. Only a constitution of iron could resist such exposure, and this journey resulted in an attack of pleurisy, which compelled this willing messenger to submit to a period of enforced rest.

Not for long, however; for in the spring of 1885 he was again working so earnestly as to arouse the rage of the anti-foreign party in Luchow Foo, and these stirred up a furious mob, who at dead of night broke into the inn where he lodged, and dragged him

into the street, where they beat him with bamboos so severely that he barely escaped with his life—the blood streaming from wounds on head and body. His clothes were stolen, and those of his Chinese assistants were torn off. Finally the authorities interfered, and sent an escort to protect him beyond the city walls.

We next hear of him as a victim to the ever-present danger of smallpox, from which he was laid up for weeks in a miserable inn four hundred miles from his home—in short, the record of his work might be summed up in the words of the first great missionary to the Gentiles; for twice he suffered shipwreck, he has been insulted and robbed, and beaten again and again by those whom he most desired to benefit; he has been "in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in weariness and painfulness, in hunger and thirst."

Finally, his health broke down under the prolonged strain, and he was ordered home, accompanied by his devoted wife and their two little ones. But ere reaching England this brave young soldier of the Cross was called to the Better Land, as was also the youngest child—a sorrowful home-coming for her who has borne so full a share in the burden of the day.

These are a fair sample of the experiences of the men who are devoting their lives to the endeavour to win these millions from their miserable idolatry. Probably there is not one of the men engaged in the "Inland Mission" who could not tell of personal adventures of the same type.

One of the chief difficulties to be encountered in reaching these masses, is that of mastering the special dialects of each great province. When we consider how sorely puzzled a Scotch peasant from Mid-Lothian or Banffshire would be by the dialect of a pure Yorkshire or Somerset man, we need scarcely wonder that the language of Canton is so incomprehensible in Peking (the two being 1800 miles apart), that men who have acquired no language in common can only converse on paper (just as a Chinaman can exchange ideas with a Japanese). Here then lies the immense advantage of disseminating books which can be read by men of all provinces, and which can be studied at leisure—good seed, which, thus scattered, may safely be trusted to result sooner or later in an abundant harvest.

Of course, from a missionary point of view, China must be incomparably the most interesting and important field in the world. Not only is it by far the largest of all heathen lands (a land whose

undeveloped mineral wealth is such that it must some day prove a source of almost boundless power among the nations of the earth), but the vigour and intellectual strength of its people, the patient perseverance and determination by which they triumph over all obstacles, the vigour of a race which year by year multiplies as the sands of the sea, and asserts its right and power to colonise in every quarter of the globe—these are qualities which make every grain of Christian influence which can be brought to bear on the Chinese doubly important. For who can tell how the little seed will multiply in the hands of such diligent gardeners? or to what far region they may carry it?

Already this long-secluded race is colonising Thibet, Mongolia, and Manchuria. Tens of thousands have settled in the beautiful Philippine Isles—in Borneo, Sumatra, Java, Cambodia, and Hawaii. We find them in Australia and New Zealand, and in every corner of the Pacific. And in how vast a stream they have poured into California we very well know. Everywhere they work their way by gentlest but most dogged force of will, by imperturbable good-nature, by a frugality which accumulates wealth where other men would starve. That they will continue more and more to overrun the earth is certain. A vast portion of heathen Chinamen carry with them the spreading curse of opium-smoking—a vice from which the Christian convert must of necessity keep himself absolutely free. So from self-interest it behoves all nations of the earth to help in this mission-work.

I believe that at the present time *all the Christian agencies in China combined are numerically equal to about two teachers for the whole population of Scotland*, so vast is the extent and population comprised in the eighteen provinces of China. In nine of these, there are as yet no resident missionaries of any denomination, and they have only been visited by itinerant preachers, members of the China Inland Mission, who, having adopted Chinese dress, and learnt in every respect to conform with the outward customs of the people, are allowed to travel with only occasional molestation, and make the most of every possibility of teaching "the way of life."

They work in couples, and, like the earliest preachers of the same story, they go by twos into every city, at least into as many cities as they can reach, and generally succeed in selling large numbers of Testaments and simple books which may work their own way.

A life which, notwithstanding all its most real hardships and

occasional dangers, yet supplies so many elements which appeal to adventurous and energetic spirits, should surely commend itself to many a brave Briton, combining as it does all the elements of most interesting mission-work amongst a keenly intellectual race, with the difficulties and the charms of travel.

Already some have discovered that such a life has attractions and claims even greater than the pursuit of big game, and many felt that a good step had been taken, when in February 1885, a party of five Bachelors of Arts of Cambridge, and two young officers, late of the Royal Artillery and the Dragoon Guards, started from London to devote themselves to the work of the Inland Mission in China.[1]

There is small wonder that when the preachers have hitherto been so few the disciples have likewise been few, especially as their own systems of faith are deeply rooted, and they are the most conservative race in the world. Yet a beginning has been made. *Fifty years ago there was not one Christian in all China connected with any Protestant Mission.* Already, notwithstanding all hindrances and the fewness of teachers, THERE ARE UPWARDS OF A HUNDRED THOUSAND RECOGNISED MEMBERS OF DIFFERENT BRANCHES OF THE PROTESTANT CHURCH, AND TWENTY-TWO THOUSAND COMMUNICANTS; and some even fancy that a day may come when this vast empire shall be numbered with those "last, who shall be first" in Christ's kingdom.

[1] These men were noted athletes, and so great was the interest excited by their decision, that a deputation of forty Cambridge undergraduates accompanied the mission band to a farewell meeting held in Exeter Hall on the eve of their departure, when every corner of the great hall was crowded to overflowing.

This good example proved infectious, for whereas in 1885 the total number of missionaries and associates was only 177, the working staff of this Inland Mission now numbers about 117 European men and 128 women. They have no guaranteed income from the Society, which, being entirely dependent on voluntary subscriptions, pays its agents according to its ability. Subscriptions will be welcomed by the Secretary, 2 Pyrland Road, Mildmay, N.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

A GLIMPSE OF THE FORBIDDEN CITY.

Sketch of the forbidden city—The Imperial Palace—The little Emperor—Recent history—Official garments for summer and winter—The Imperial Seals—Mandarins' buttons—Chinese watchmakers—An open-air fair—Beggars' Bridge—Chinese notions of fair hair—Gambling with crickets—In the Chinese city—Curio streets—Picture streets—Another fair—The American Legation.

Monday, 9th.

BEING anxious to secure sketches of the beautiful grounds of the Imperial Palace, of which we obtain lovely views from a grand marble bridge in the Imperial city, and from some other points, looking across the great moat, Mr Murray most kindly undertook to escort me thither at the first glimmer of dawn, before even the beggars were astir.

Accordingly we started at about 4 A.M., when the streets were wondrously still, and not a dust-cloud had yet been stirred up. We had, however, the misfortune to have secured a particularly slow cart, and its bumping seemed more irritating than usual, as I fully realised the importance of reaching our destination very early. As it was, before we got there the sun was well up and shining full in our eyes, and the population was also well awake; and as soon as I began to draw, every passer-by stopped to watch, and forgot to go away, so that, though happily no one could get between me and the view, the bridge and thoroughfare were soon densely blocked.

The people, however, were all exceedingly polite, as they always are when any one produces pencil and paper; but when one ventures on a few touches in water-colour the excitement becomes unbounded, and the anxiety to obtain a glimpse of the process is most embarrassing. I confess I looked with longing eyes to the rich green meadow and shady trees of part of the pleasure-grounds which come close to the bridge, whence I might have sketched the scene in delightful peace and comfort; but that meadow, like every other tempting corner in Peking, is forbidden ground.

Now to try and give you some idea of the scene which so fascinated me—chiefly, I daresay, by its contrast with all the accessible places in Peking. To begin with the nine-arched marble bridge on which I had taken up my station. It is 600 feet long,

and spans a pretty lake in which is faithfully mirrored a very pretty richly wooded hill covered with fanciful buildings. Being Chinese pleasure-grounds, it seems quite a matter of course to learn that the lake and the hill are alike artificial, and that the so-called Golden Mount, "Chin-Shan," though about 150 feet high, is, in fact, a huge storehouse of coal, originally deposited here as a supply in case of siege, and then covered with mud dredged from the canal, so as to produce a good rich soil in which to plant trees and shrubs.

This Hill of Coal is crested by a large, very peculiar, pagoda, or relic-shrine, to the honour either of Buddha himself or of some peculiarly holy Lama. The usual bell-shaped circular building rests on a series of circular platforms, and these on a great square base (the combination of the circle and the square which we noticed at the Temple of Heaven, and which is common to so many grave-mounds throughout the empire).

Here and there, through the foliage, rise most attractive curved roofs of brilliant apple-green or golden-yellow tiles, dazzlingly bright in the light of the morning sun, and bits of grey crenelated wall, or of red wall, peep out and suggest some point of interest. A charming kiosk, all roof and pillars, rises from the water's brink; a little creek is spanned by a high-pitched marble bridge, and a wider arm of the lake is crossed by a three-arched marble bridge. All are mirrored in the calm waters, from which, further to the right, rises a fascinating little summer-house, while beyond the belt of water-weeds, on the brink of the lake, float lotus-blossoms, and smaller water-lilies with glossy leaves. Close by, on the right hand and on the left, lies the tempting meadow aforesaid, shaded by weeping willows.

But the main interest centres at the further end of the lake, where, resplendent with gleaming yellow tiles, lie the various buildings of the Palace. I could see one great triple-roofed building, surrounded by a whole cluster of fanciful minor buildings, the whole apparently enclosed by an ornamental wall, from which rise on this side eight more of the fanciful double-roofed buildings. A little further lies another great yellow-roofed palace, and a conical single roof, surmounted by a golden ball, which, from its resemblance in form to the Tablet Chapel at the Temple of Heaven, I assume to be the private temple of the Imperial ancestors—yellow, of course.

From another point beyond the moat I had obtained a good sketch of the further end of the Hill of Coal, which is crowned by

a red temple with three yellow roofs (one above the other, like an Imperial State umbrella), and with minor double-roofed yellow temples at intervals all round it. Just within the wall on that side is a very fine Imperial temple, or rather group of temples, with most complicated roofs (triple, but with many gables), and this is approached by three wondrously gorgeous triple *pai-lows* (commemorative gateways), all of dazzling yellow china.

One only realises how huge these eccentric gateways really are, by noting the diminutive size of the blue crowds who walk past them between the wall and the moat. I have been close up to these gateways, and obtained a near sight of these Imperial temples, which, like the gateways, are marvellous structures, and faced with china of the most beautiful and elaborate patterns, in which, of course, the dragon and phœnix figure largely, as does also on each a great tablet with an inscription in Chinese character. The odd thing, however, is to see these grand portals closed by shabby gates of common wooden paling!!

But from the further side of the moat, these buildings are only seen appearing above the long straight wall which runs parallel to the water. A similar wall runs along the opposite bank of the moat, obviously enclosing some other Imperial property, for from among the tall trees which overtop the wall, rise two other buildings—one with a double, the other with a triple bright-yellow roof, and such plainly assert their connection with the Dragon Throne. Bright-green roofs denote the dwellings of princes of the blood-royal.

Now I have told you all I can say about the Emperor's surroundings, and there is not the smallest chance of seeing anything more. Whether due to distance I cannot say, but the scene certainly does not lack enchantment.

While my numerous art-students were blocking up the bridge, a considerable number of big mandarins, with large retinues, passed on their way to the Palace to hold early interview with the little Emperor and the two Empresses. I confess I marvelled that no objection was made to my becoming the occasion of such a crowd on a great thoroughfare, but I suppose that even great men get used to crowds in this country, and this crowd was certainly a pattern of goodness. For one thing, they are well acquainted with my companion, and are very friendly towards him, and this great bridge is one of his favourite stations for bookselling.

It certainly is strange to look across the pretty lake to that fairy-like palace, with its roofs of glittering golden tiles, and to think

that since the days of Lord Macartney, all efforts of diplomacy have only once contrived to obtain an audience from its jealously guarded sovereign (guarded by soldiers armed with bow and arrows!)[1] To think that, in very deed, there before my eyes is the real home of the Celestial Emperors of childhood's dreams! And in truth, if report speaks truly, a good many uncanny scenes have been enacted beneath the shadow of those gleaming roofs!

Amongst other rumours of recent years, it is currently believed here that the very unexpected death of Ah-Lu-Té, the poor young widowed Empress of the Emperor Tungchih (which so quickly followed that of her lord), though generally ascribed to meritorious suicide, was really due to the effects of a cup administered quite in the Queen Eleanor and Fair Rosamond style, to avert the probability of her giving birth to a son. Had she done so, his succession to the throne would have placed her in the position of Empress-mother, instead of one of the two strong-minded and able old ladies who have practically held the reins of government since their own husband, the Emperor Hien-fung, died in 1861 of vexation, grief, and humiliation, after the barbarians had sacked his Summer Palace, and otherwise insulted the majesty of the Son of Heaven. (Taking all these untoward circumstances into consideration, it does seem rather hard on the Court physician that he should have been degraded and deprived of his most precious possession—the honorific button on the top of his cap—because he failed to preserve the life of his Imperial patient, notwithstanding his having expended a sum equal to £250 on the purchase of "joss-paper" to be burnt on his behalf!)

The two Imperial widows (one of whom was mother to the young Emperor) proved themselves excellent Regents throughout the whole reign of the young man (as he died while still a minor), and it was perhaps only natural that they could not brook the possibility that the girl whom they had selected to be his wife should actually supersede one of them. But perhaps they are blamed unjustly, as it is deemed an honourable action for a childless wife to commit suicide on the death of her lord, and moreover she thus escapes from a weary lifelong seclusion in subjection to her mother-in-law.

I think whoever has read the account of that ill-starred wedding

[1] That once was the audience granted by the last Emperor to the representatives of the Foreign Powers—*i.e.*, Sir Thomas Wade (British), M. de Geofroy (French), Mr Low (U.S.), and others, Russian, Dutch, and German. But even these failed to obtain admission to the Palace, the audience being granted in a building beyond its limits.

as told by Mr Simpson in 'Meeting the Sun,' must have felt a personal interest in the fate of that poor girl, so suddenly translated from her comfortable position as the daughter of a gentleman in private life, to the dull dignities of the Imperial throne.

I do not mean to imply that she was not of good birth. On the mother's side she was very highly connected, she being a daughter of the Prince of Cheng. But there is no objection to a girl of the lowest rank being selected for this honour, as all the most beautiful and talented girls in the empire, of whatsoever estate, are assembled at the Palace to take part in the competitive examination, in which the successful candidate is exalted to the rank of Empress, and the flower of her companions take second and third class positions in the zenana.

As an example of truly oriental fluctuations in social position, I may instance the beautiful mother of the Emperor Hien-fung, who actually kept a fruit-stall in the dirty streets of Peking, till her beauty attracted the attention of the Prime Minister, when she was promoted to a place in the Imperial zenana!

As regards poor Ah-Lu-Té, the Dowager-Empresses certainly made very short work of her possible claims, for no sooner was the young Emperor Tungchih dead (he died of smallpox at Peking in January 1875), than they hurriedly summoned a family conclave of the Manchu princes, and decided to proclaim Tsaitien, the infant son of Prince Ch'un,[1] successor to the Dragon Throne.

Then and there, at midnight, the sleepy and astonished child was brought from his bed to receive the homage of his kinsmen, after which he was duly proclaimed under the title of the Emperor Kwangsu—*i.e.*, "The Illustrious Succession"—and an address was published purporting to have been the expression of the dying Emperor nominating Kwangsu as his heir.

According to Western notions, supposing there was really no heir to the throne, the child of Prince Kung would probably have been selected; but Chinese etiquette is peculiar, and as it is impossible for a father to do homage to his son, the father of an Emperor must necessarily retire from holding any public office—a practical loss to the State, which in the case of Prince Kung would have been impossible.

So this small prince (born August 15, 1871), on whom no European has ever been privileged to set eyes, pursues his studies under the direction of two tutors, who are superintended by the Prince Ch'un. The 'Peking Gazette' keeps the lieges informed of

[1] Prince Ch'un was brother to Hien-fung.

the details of the young student's intellectual training, and dwells on the necessity of allowing "none but persons of staid and correct conduct" to be in attendance upon him. Nevertheless, sad to state, it is compelled to intimate that it has been found necessary to select a Lahachutze or whipping-boy—proving that, like many of our own English kings,[1] the young Emperor of China is thus punished by proxy!

Amongst other curious details with which the public is thus favoured, is an apology from the governor of a district in Mongolia, whence two cases of some superlative jam are annually sent, for the special use of the boy, but which on this occasion was not to be obtained, the fruit having failed to ripen.

Meanwhile the reins of government continue in the hands of the Empresses-Dowager, and of Prince Kung, who is uncle to the young Emperor. One of these ladies is familiarly known as Tung-tai-hou —*i.e.*, "The Empress of the East"[2]—but her correct official title is Hiau-Hsiau-cheng-hsien-hwang-hou. Rather a serious mouthful! and moreover a troublesome signature to write frequently in Chinese character!

As to Prince Kung, he is a keen, energetic, well-awakened man of enlightened views, and has been in power ever since the death of his brother in 1861. He is so great that he wears on his hat no distinguishing button to mark his rank, but only a small, crown-shaped knot of red braid. Sometimes he dresses in yellow, showing his Imperial descent; and all his appendages—fan, pipe, purse, &c.—are adorned with yellow fringes and tassels. At other times he appears in purple silk, trimmed with ermine, with an outer robe of the finest sea-otter skin, and two long chains of beads, one of coral and one of amber. This dress is worn with a circular turned-up hat of the regular Tartar form, showing the lining of black velvet, and the top quite covered by the invariable red silk tassel.

This, however, is only worn in winter or spring, for, like everything else in China, matters referring to dress are governed by most arbitrary rules, and every official in the empire, from the highest to the lowest, must assume his summer or winter costume on a special day, of which due notice is given in the 'Peking Gazette,' by a statement to the effect that the Emperor has put on his summer (or winter) hat. On this day, therefore, the fur-lined

[1] *E.g.*, Edward VI., Edward VII., Charles I., James VI., and various kings of France, notably Henry IV., who were all provided with whipping-boys, who should endure the pains which might not be inflicted on the royal person!

[2] The Empress of the East, Tung-tai-hou, did not long survive the young Empress. She died in November 1881, aged forty-five years.

robes and turned-up black satin hats lined with dark cloth, and the neat little hand-stoves, must be exchanged for silken garments with satin-lined sleeves and fans, and neat little conical turned-down straw or bamboo hats surmounted by a red silk tassel, so worn as to cover the hat, red horse-hair being substituted for silk on a travelling hat.

Considering the difference of climate between the country to the north of Peking and that to the south of Canton—a distance of 2000 miles north and south—one would fancy this might prove inconvenient, but such trifles are not considered here, where everything is done by rule. Even the way a Peking cart hangs on the axle is decided by law—a nobleman being allowed to have the axle further back than ordinary mortals, so as to secure easier motion!

But however heavy he may be, or however exalted his rank, he may on no account presume to have more than four bearers for his sedan-chair, unless he be either a Governor-General, a Tartar General, or the Governor of a province! In Peking even officials of these three exalted grades are only entitled to four bearers within the city, but are allowed to have eight when outside the walls. Officers of lower grade may only have two bearers while in the city, but four are allowed for country travel. How fervently their human ponies must pray for the promotion of heavy men!

Only certain high-class officials are allowed to go through Peking in their sedan-chairs; men of lower grade are supposed to ride, and are escorted by a specified number of equerries. Should a great man prefer riding, he must have a retinue of ten such, two preceding and eight following him. The descending scale requires eight, six, or four retainers, while men of lower rank have but one. Even this modest escort conveys information to the initiated. Should this solitary groom precede his master, it is known that the latter is a fourth-class official; but should he follow, the master is stamped as quite a minor mandarin!

High officials are further distinguished by having a red tassel suspended from the martingale of their pony (I see nothing but ponies here).

But to return to the subject of dress, I am told that every tiny detail is regulated by a law inflexible as that of the Medes and Persians. No fitful fashions here distract the mind of man or woman, for the precise material and cut of every garment, male or female, to be worn in every grade of society, is minutely specified in some book of fossil wisdom, from which no one dares to depart

in one iota. Therein is defined the precise position of the five buttons which fasten the tunic (on no consideration may a tailor so far indulge his fancy as to substitute four or six for the regulation five buttons!) Even the manner in which the hat-band must pass behind the ears and under the chin is most accurately laid down.

As to the pretty embroideries which seem to us so fantastic, they are also unchangeable badges of rank—every man *must* wear that to which he is entitled, embroidered on the back and breast of his tunic. Thus an "angelic stork," worked in gold thread, denotes a gentleman of the first rank. A kam-ki, or beautiful pheasant, denotes the second rank; and the peacock, the wild goose, the silver pheasant, a cormorant, a ki-chik, a quail, and a white bird mark nine descending degrees of civil rank. In every case the bird is represented standing on a rock in a storm-tossed ocean, looking towards the sun (which I suppose represents the Emperor).

Military grades are similarly denoted by animals, which also stand on rocks amid stormy waves gazing at the sun. The highest rank is marked by a dragon-headed, cloven-footed beast, called a chelun; and the descending grades wear a lion, a leopard, a tiger, a bear, a chetah, and a sea-horse.

Noblemen must wear a four-clawed dragon on back and breast, and officers of different rank have on their tunics five, six, seven, or eight dragons with four claws on each leg, and in certain instances, as a special mark of Imperial favour, a nobleman is authorised to wear a five-clawed dragon. But woe betide the rash citizen who should presume so to appear in a garment, however old, on which this Imperial symbol is embroidered! For a whole weary month he would be condemned to wear the dreadful wooden collar, and would then receive one hundred blows with a bamboo —a form of flogging not to be quickly forgotten! For a commoner even to wear a dress embroidered with gold thread is an offence against law, and only certain classes are privileged to wear clothes made of silk. These sumptuary laws even decide who may wear boots of black satin, and who must be content with black cloth shoes.

Even in providing the equivalent of a waterproof for rainy weather, differences of rank must be made clear. The highest officials must have a bright red robe. Those of second or third rank, whether civil or military, wear a purple dress with a red hat. The next three grades have a red dress and hat with purple border. Men of the seventh class are dressed in purple from head to foot,

while lower ranks are distinguished by purple hats edged with red. Only imagine what a terrible thing it would be to be colour-blind in a country where each gradation in rank calls for a different degree of reverence!! Fortunately for the Chinese, this peculiarity is said to be unknown here.

Happily one simple distinction suffices to settle the question of honour due—namely, the colour of the honorific button on the very top of the cap. Officials of the two highest grades are distinguished by red balls, either dark or bright red. Those of the third and fourth class wear blue of two shades. The fifth class has a crystal ball, the sixth a white ball of mother-of-pearl. Mandarins of the seventh and eighth grades wear golden balls, and those of the ninth rank have balls of silver. These are the lowest grade entitled to these emblems of nobility. There is, however, a further complication even in the reverence due to these balls or buttons, inasmuch as the same coloured ball marks the corresponding grade, whether civil or military. The former, however, ranks immeasurably higher in public estimation.

Besides these balls and the red silk tassel, which must be worn both in summer and winter, there is a distinction in the feather which hangs straight from the button. Just as in Scotland a Highland chief is distinguished from his clansmen by wearing three eagle's feathers, while they are entitled to one only; so here, though all mandarins are entitled to wear one common peacock's feather, only those of the highest rank are privileged to wear a two-eyed feather.

Not only on the top of his head, but also on the top of his sedan-chair, must a nobleman proclaim his true rank. A really exalted dignitary has a silver ball on the top of his chair, whereas a smaller man may only have one of tin!

It seems rational enough that details of official uniform should be thus minutely regulated, but that domestic life should be subject to the same mechanical system seems strange indeed. Yet so it is. The same law which forbids a woman of the lower orders to dress like one of middle class, nor suffers the latter to ape the garments of her superiors, and which precisely defines the position of persons who may possess umbrellas made of silk or cloth instead of the oiled paper used by the common herd, also lays down minute regulations for the size, design, and material of every portion of the houses which may lawfully be built by persons of various grade. Certainly in the sense of freedom from interference, no Chinaman can say his house is his castle!

The wearisome ceremonials which have to be observed in all phases of Chinese life, of course reach their highest complication within the Palace; so for fear of any mistake being made, the manner in which every detail is to be carried out is minutely specified in 'The Book of Ceremonies'—a handy book of reference, which is said to number two hundred volumes!! Therein are prescribed rules of action for every event which it is supposed can possibly affect Imperial life, from the hour of birth till that wherein the funeral tablet has taken its final place in the Temple of Ancestors.

I am told that some of the great men whom I saw going to the Palace were the Emperor's Privy Councillors, several of whom are Manchu Tartars and others are Chinese. One of their duties is to affix the Imperial seals to every proclamation or other State paper. There are no less than twenty-five of these seals. They are made of various kinds of jade, white, green, blue, yellow, and clouded, and one is made of sandal-wood. In size they vary from four to six inches square, and all bear the impress of the Imperial dragon, which is thus stamped in vermilion on the documents endowing them with omnipotent authority.

Although the crowd were so very kindly and civil, their multitude, and the consciousness of incessant movement, to say nothing of the stifling dust stirred up by one and all, and the pitiless scorching heat of a sun already high in the heavens, made sketching anything but a pleasure; so as soon as I had secured the necessary notes, we moved on from the Imperial city, and through the Tartar city into the Chinese city, that I might there try to find a key suited to my watch. This we did without much difficulty, as there are a considerable number of watchmakers in the city, descendants of those originally taught by the Jesuits, to which, I suppose, is due the fact that most of them are Roman Catholics. There are said to be about five thousand of these hereditary Christians in the city, in addition to the converts of more recent date.

We passed the Roman Catholic Cathedral, but had not time to enter, as there was so much to be seen; and really sightseeing under such conditions of heat, dust, and noise, becomes quite bewildering. We passed through a great fair in the open street, which beat all we have yet seen, as a combination of these three. It was a real rag-fair, without even the pretence of booths or tables, all objects for sale being laid out actually on the ground, in the dirty dust. The objects for sale consisted chiefly of old garments of every description—some even richly embroidered, but

suggestive of smallpox! There were also a great quantity of furs and skins, which looked tolerably good, but the rash purchaser generally discovers to his cost that the wily Mongolian knows of many processes by which inferior and ill-cured skins can be dressed so as to deceive even a practised eye.

(Really good robes, of the loveliest silky white sheepskin or black astrakhan, are brought by regular merchants, and offered for sale at all the Legations and other European dwellings; but even with these it is not always easy to detect the difference between good curing and bad, and the purchaser of the latter finds his garment tear like paper.)

Besides the clothes and furs and fur-lined robes, all manner of cheap, useful things, and stores of food are also outspread upon the ground, and become more and more thickly coated with dust (the dust of Peking!) as the ceaseless traffic of the day moves on. The strange market seemed to extend for nearly a mile, and oh! the noise, and oh! the extraordinary variety of smells, all evil, which assailed us as we passed the busy crowd of much-chaffering buyers and sellers.

On all sides were merchants shouting out descriptions of their wares; blind musicians wandering about in companies, making horrible discords; jugglers exhibiting strange feats to the delight of the crowd; barbers plying their razors on shaven crowns and faces, and carefully plaiting the long black tresses; while quack doctors and mountebanks of all sorts each added their share to the general din. Dentists and chiropodists both shout their invitations to suffering mankind to enter the booths, where, in presence of all who care to gaze, they carry on their work. The chiropodists are said to be exceedingly skilful.

One spot remains imprinted on my memory as a picture of indescribable misery. It is a very handsome great bridge adorned with numerous pillars, each surmounted by a sculptured mythical beast. It is commonly called the Beggars' Bridge, because of the terrible number of these wretched beings who make it their headquarters, and lie about in hideous groups, or crouch in rows on either side of the highway, appealing to the passers-by for even the tiniest coin to save them from death. I can scarcely say from starvation, for they looked starved already, nearly all of them being mere skeletons, clothed only in a few filthy rags, and victims of divers diseases. As we pass along these streets we hear one oft-reiterated prayer—Kumsha! Kumsha!—*i.e.*, gift—the Chinese equivalent of *backsheesh*. I believe that many are lepers.

It is sickening even to look upon such wretchedness, and the gratitude of the poor creatures for infinitesimal doles speaks volumes. But most of the Chinese are so accustomed to the sight, and probably so overpowered by the multitude of beggars, that they seem to take no notice whatever of them.

Almost the only class whose misery seems to call forth some compassion are the blind beggars, and, incredible as it appears, medical testimony distinctly proves that in many cases blindness has been deliberately produced by the wretched sufferer himself, as being the only possible means of appealing to public pity! Parents thus blind their children by puncturing the eye with a needle, while men, and even girls, sometimes deliberately destroy their own sight by introducing lime (or still more horrible, vaccine matter) inside the eyelid! In Southern China blind singing-girls are quite a recognised institution, and the profession is said to be lucrative, the singers being handsomely dressed, and escorted by female attendants. They sing in shrill falsetto, accompanying themselves on quaint guitars covered with snake-skins.

Any one who is curious to prove how far a dollar can be made to go, can here experimentalise to his heart's content; and though I am hopelessly puzzled by the varying exchange between taels and dollars, large Peking cash and small brass cash, of first or second quality, I know that for a dollar you receive upwards of a thousand cash, one of which is as much as a beggar may reasonably hope to receive, and for which he can obtain a cake of black bread. Under these circumstances the gift of a Peking cash, which is about equivalent to a penny, is quite a fortune, and its value seems to range from twelve to twenty small cash. On the other hand, there are some iron cash in circulation so worthless that these very beggars have been known to pelt one another with them in sheer disgust!

I was much amused to learn that one small but discriminating beggar, who persistently claimed alms, was addressing me as "Aged Sir"! He must have been a recent arrival from the provinces, where fair-haired "foreign devils" are still unknown, the natural Chinese notion of fair hair being that it must be the foreign equivalent of grey. I remember some boatmen near Foo-Chow discussing the age of a very fair-haired German lady, whom they decided to be truly venerable, when, somewhat to their discomfiture, she produced her small boy, who was still fairer, and asked what they supposed was his age?

This foreign peculiarity, of possessing hair which is not black, adds immensely to the interest of inspecting foreigners. One of

my friends, a Scot, whose hair is of the ruddiest gold, was one day travelling in a remote district with a companion of nut-brown hue. Finding they could not escape from the curiosity of the staring crowd who struggled for a good sight of them, they suggested that really if the people must all see them, it was only fair that they should pay for the sight. To this they immediately assented. "Yes! yes!" they cried; "it is quite fair. We are willing to pay so many cash for a good look at you; but we can only pay half price for looking at the other man, as he is not nearly such a good specimen of a Red-headed Foreign Devil!" The travellers took them at their word, and collected a large quantity of cash, which they subsequently scattered for a general scramble, to the great delight of all present.

We halted at one corner to watch what was evidently a very exciting form of gambling—namely, a fight between trained crickets. I had seen a considerable number of these little creatures offered for sale in tiny bamboo cages, Chinamen having a great liking for their chirping (and there are no cheery hearths in this country to attract the crickets by their genial warmth). But I had not before realised their position in the gambling world! Cricket-fights, however, seem to be as satisfactory a medium for gambling as cock-fighting or any kindred sport, so these poor little insects are most scientifically extracted from their hiding-places in the old walls, and carefully secured till the great day of battle, when two at a time are placed on a flat tray with a deep rim, and are encouraged to fight, which they do with a hearty goodwill, uttering shrill chirps of defiance as they become conscious of one another's presence, and then seizing one another and wrestling in good earnest. The owner of the victorious cricket will probably clear quite a handful of cash—possibly a whole pennyworth, which would be quite a fortune for the day.

But it seems this form of small betting is by no means confined to the street beggars. Many rich men delight in it, and play for heavy sums amounting to hundreds of dollars, so that a well-proven champion cricket will fetch quite a large price in the market. I am told that many of the Buddhist priests are keen cricket-gamblers, this mild sport apparently ranking among the legitimate clerical amusements of China, as the angler's art does in Britain.

In Southern China there are regular cricket clubs, which hold their meetings in sheds erected for the purpose. Here the combatants are carefully weighed and measured, the bets recorded, and

money deposited and weighed, to ensure honesty. The care of these little creatures is quite an elaborate business. Their diet and general health is most anxiously attended to. The former includes fish of two sorts, honey, certain insects, and boiled chestnuts and rice. But in case of illness there is quite a variety of remedies. If the poor insect has had a chill, a mosquito is administered; or if it has gluttonously indulged in a surfeit, certain red insects are a suitable corrective. An asthmatic cricket is fed on bamboo butterflies, while young shoots of green-pea correct fever. Bathing is provided for by a tiny cup of water. With all this watchful care the little prize-fighters are short-lived, from twelve to fourteen weeks being their average term of life. At death the distinguished winners of many fights are honoured with silver coffins, the size of thimbles, and their afflicted owners give these formal interment, which, however, must be done secretly, so

"They bury them darkly at dead of night"—

the object of secrecy being the conviction that the spirits of the dead crickets will so thirst for fresh victims that in the following spring they will return to the place of their burial, there to animate new crickets; so in the early summer cricket-hunters again return thither secretly by night, and capture them by the light of their lanterns.

The crickets are not the only creatures whose diet and medical care is attended to by the gamblers of China. I am told that the greatest pains are bestowed on the quails, pigeons, game-cocks, and other fighting birds (even the pigeons are kept for fighting!), and in order to improve their plumage and make it glossy, they are occasionally fed on cuttle-fish which has been stuffed with sulphur, and then dried in the sun.

In one broad street we came to a sort of market with innumerable booths for the sale of fish, fowl, and vegetables. Among fish I noted not only a large number of eels, as might naturally be expected from the muddy river, but also a good supply of fish that looked like whitings and herrings, and an abundance of cockles. The vegetable supply is excellent—beans and lentils, potatoes and turnips, carrots and onions, all in good condition.

We passed through an endless succession of streets, more attractive by far than those in the Tartar city. A good many of the shop fronts are richly carved and gilt, and have rich red colouring about the upper storey, and sign-boards supported by dragons' heads, as bringers of good-luck. There are beautiful objects in

the shops, even as seen from the street—precious vases of enamelled copper, basins, incense-burners, candlesticks, porcelain vases, divers objects in jade, agate, and rock-crystal, endless stores of rich embroideries, and a great variety of bronzes of the usual stiff patterns, which seem to me so sadly lacking in the grace of Japanese designs. But in truth it is altogether impossible to avoid contrasting the fresh clean shops of Japan, and their fascinating contents, with these, so smothered in dust that cleanliness is impossible. It would break the heart of a Japanese to find himself deposited in Peking!

All these shops have storehouses at the back, in which their most precious goods are stowed away, and are only produced when a really likely customer is in the shop. The courtyard, which lies between the shop and the store, is covered with stout wire-netting, or else with strong wooden bars from which are suspended numerous bells, all of which give tongue the moment a rash robber tries to effect an entrance. Some of the street names are very nice. One near the Legation is "Happy Sparrow Street," for these ubiquitous little birds hop about in Peking as cheerily as in London. There is also a "Monkey Street," near the Observatory, which is not so easily accounted for, as the monkey tribe do not haunt these parts. I am much struck by the Chinese expressions to describe a thoroughfare, or a *cul-de-sac*. The former is said to be "a live street," the latter is "a dead street." One street is distinguished as the Immeasurably Great Street, another is the Stone Tiger Street. There are Obedience Street, Barbarian Street, and the noisiest and busiest of all, thronged with all manner of vociferous pedlars, is misnamed "The Street of Perpetual Repose." More to the point is the name of the Confucian Hall, which is well described as "The Hall of Intense Mental Exercise." From such glimpses as we outsiders can obtain of the shady secluded grounds of the Imperial Palace, there seems considerable fitness in naming it "The Tranquil Palace of Heaven," while the Empress's house is "The Palace of Earth's Repose," and a certain white marble gateway is known as "The Gate of Everlasting Peace." Another is "The Great Pure Gate," and a third is "The Gate of Steadfast Purity."

One of these streets is known to foreigners as Picture Street, from the number of shops it contains devoted to the sale of hand-painted scrolls for hanging on the walls. These also are not to compare with either the grace or the quaintness of Japanese painting. They are strong and gaudy, but I did not see any that gave

me pleasure, though I bought some scrolls of flowers because of their amazing cheapness.

At last, fairly tired out with looking and wondering, but still more with the heat and dust, we once more consigned ourselves to the torture of the covered cart and endured an agonising hour of bumps (proving that streets hitherto unvisited were capable of being even worse than those we already knew), and at last thankfully hailing the sight of the tall red poles which mark from afar the entrance to this comparatively cool retreat.

By this afternoon, however, I had nursed a fresh store of courage; so when Dr Edkins offered to escort me to a great fair which is being held in the grounds of a temple not very far off, I, of course, summoned sufficient energy to go there, and very amusing it proved. It is one of a set of periodical fairs which are held every ten days at some part of the city, every sort of thing being there offered for sale. There are stalls for straw hats, for carved wood, for food, sweetmeats, savoury dishes, clothes, pipes, artificial flowers, caged birds, live pigeons, precious snuff-bottles with pattern cut out in high relief, beads for rosaries or necklaces, men's shoes and women's shoes, fans, spoons, and teapots. I bought several fascinating curio stands in many compartments, made of pear-wood, stained black, and carved to resemble knotted bamboo; also lovely bright scarlet porcelain cups with pattern of bamboo foliage in white.

A special feature of these fairs is the multitude of admirably modelled clay insects of all sorts—grasshoppers, spiders, &c., some of which are suspended from a coiled wire so as to tremble with lifelike movement.

It was quite a pretty lively scene, all the people having apparently put on their best clothes, and it was a laughing, cheery crowd, and included a good many women—very quietly dressed, however, with only little touches of bright colour, and a few silken artificial flowers and large pins in their elaborately dressed hair.

From the fact of all Tartar women being large-footed, their Chinese sisters, tottering on poor deformed feet, are doubly conspicuous here. Considering that from the Tartar Empress and the ladies of the Court, down to the lowliest attendant, every woman in the Imperial Palace rejoices in uncramped feet, one might suppose that this example would influence their Chinese sisters; but here, where each class adheres rigidly to its own customs, such changes are not effected by example.

Seeing, however, how, at the bidding of the Conqueror, this whole race adopted the troublesome fashion of shaving the brow

and wearing a long plait as a distinguishing mark of servitude, it would seem probable that were the Emperor to issue an Imperial mandate to protect girls from this torture, it would be obeyed. For the sake of the women of China, it is to be hoped that the advancing tide of enlarged ideas which is already rippling even around the Imperial Palace, may ere long induce the present Emperor to try whether he can effect this domestic revolution. Unfortunately, however, so far as foreign influence is concerned, observant Chinamen are too much amazed at the folly of the barbarian women who compress their waists and vitals, to learn from them in this less important detail.

We have still to do another expedition to-night in the awful carts! (don't you wonder how our bones contrive to hang together?) We have to attend a farewell reception in honour of the U. S. Grants at the "Ta-Mei-Kwo-foo," or "Great American Country" Palace, "Mei" being the nearest approach to America which the Chinese tongue can manage. The said Legation is at present enlivened by a considerable number of U.S. naval officers from the Assuelot and the Richmond. The former is the vessel in which General Grant has actually travelled. The latter, which is the flag-ship which was fitted up in magnificent style to take him round the world on his grand tour, was not quite ready to start, so was ordered to follow and catch him up. It has fulfilled the first half of its instructions to perfection, for it has followed him round three-fourths of the world, and has now only caught him up in time to take him to Japan!![1]

[1] To Japan only! From thence we happened to be fellow-travellers to San Francisco on board the huge City of Tokio. *Vide* 'Fire-Fountains.' By C. F. Gordon Cumming. Blackwood & Sons.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

PEKING SEEN FROM THE WALLS.

View from the city walls—The Emperor's hunting-grounds—How streets are watered—Peking dust—Broad streets and rag-fairs—Sketch from the Hata-mun—Winter and summer—Fuel—Street restaurants—Oyster-shell windows—North Chinamen more ruddy than Southerners—Popular temples—Odd offerings—An evening walk in the city.

June 10th.

THERE is just one way by which to obtain quite an illusive impression of Peking—namely, by looking down on the city from its majestic walls. Then all the squalor, and dirt, and dust which are so painfully prominent at all other times seem to disappear, and, as if by magic, you find yourself overlooking rich bowers of greenery, tree-tops innumerable, from which here and there rise quaint ornamental roofs of temples, or mandarins' houses, with roofs of harmonious grey tiles, or of bright glazed porcelain, which gleams in the sunlight. Then you realise how many cool pleasant homes wealthy citizens contrive to reserve in the midst of these dingy, grey, densely crowded streets, of which you only catch a glimpse here and there, just enough to give a suggestion of life to the whole scene.

Such a glimpse I first obtained one morning at early dawn, ere the dust-clouds had begun to rise with the day's busy traffic, and the peaceful beauty of the scene struck me the more forcibly from the contrast betwixt the bird's-eye view and the reality when seen on the level. In truth, when standing on the south wall which divides the Tartar city from the Chinese, it is scarcely possible to realise that one is looking down on the dwellings of about 1,300,000 human beings! Of these, 900,000 inhabit the Tartar city, which, seen from the walls, is apparently a beautiful park, richly wooded, and now clothed in its densest midsummer foliage. Only from certain points do you catch even a glimpse of a broad dusty street. And yet so effectually do high walls enclose these many shady gardens, that an enormous majority of the toiling crowd never see a tree—probably scarcely know that such exist, as the people never dream of coming on to the walls, from which alone these are visible.

Looking over the wall on the other side into the Chinese city is certainly more suggestive of human beings, as there are fewer

trees,—for here the luxurious folk who dwell in palaces with shady courts are all Tartars, whereas the Chinese are the working-bees, and their poor mud-huts are densely packed all along the Grain-Tribute Canal, which here approaches from Tung-Chow, and is led quite round the square of the Tartar city, and almost quite round the Chinese city. Happily, from this height one does not discern the unutterable filth of its stagnant waters! But in the distance the houses again lose themselves in tree-tops, for we are looking towards the great parks of the Temples of Agriculture and of Heaven, and the lovely blue porcelain roofs of the latter are plainly visible.

Beyond these again, to the south of the City Wall, stretches a vast enclosure called the Hai-tsz, or "Great Sea-like Plain," which is the Emperor's private hunting-grounds, enclosed by a high brick wall, forty miles in circumference. Although emphatically a deer-forest, it can certainly not be accused of depopulating the country, as no less than sixteen hundred men are said to be employed in connection with this place!

Like everything else in China, an Imperial hunt is (or was) conducted in most ceremonious style, the Emperor being preceded by a procession of twenty-four great State umbrellas, which must have proved highly conducive to sport! But the most popular form of sport is hawking with carefully-trained falcons, and perhaps they do not object to all the umbrellas! Hawking of a mild sort seems greatly in favour with the citizens of Peking, who go into the immediate neighbourhood of the city with a hooded hawk sitting on their left wrist. To one foot of the hawk is attached a light string about seventy feet long, which is wound on a wooden roller. This unrolls as the bird darts in pursuit of his quarry, and so limits his flight, and enables the owner to recapture the hawk should it fail to strike at once. There are none of the beautiful flights which give such fascination to the sport in Europe.

Now turning to the opposite direction, and looking into the Tartar city from this elevation of about fifty feet, the brilliant yellow-tiled roofs of the Imperial Palace are most conspicuous and very beautiful, as they rise above the masses of dark-green foliage. A considerable number of ornamental buildings, all yellow-roofed and gleaming like burnished gold, are scattered in every direction through the Imperial pleasure-grounds, and with the aid of good opera-glasses one can distinguish details very fairly, but of course when winter has stripped the trees, the view must be far more distinct.

The green-tiled roofs of the British Embassy are also conspicuous, and some important grey roofs also tower above the trees, and far away on the horizon lie a range of distant hills on whose slopes nestle beautifully situated temples and monasteries, some of which mercifully open their doors to foreigners, and allow them to rent summer quarters in a cooler region than this.

Of course, as you travel right round the walls, the view changes considerably, one lot of roofs giving place to another, so that you obtain a bird's-eye view of the situation of most of the points of interest in the city. It would, however, take a really good walker to go the whole round of the walls, as the Tartar city forms a square four miles in every direction, adjoining the Chinese city, which is an oblong, thirteen miles in circumference. It does not, however, follow that there are twenty-nine miles of outer wall, as three miles and a half of the south Tartar wall does double duty. (Is it not a strange turning of the tables to think how of old the Chinese built their Great Wall to shut out the Tartars, and now the Tartar city wall excludes the Chinese from their own capital!)

My morning walk on these quiet lonely walls had been so thoroughly enjoyable (a very exceptional sensation in Peking), that I induced Dr Edkins to accompany me there this afternoon. We gained access to the wall by a little wicket-gate beside the Hata-mun, which is the great casemated gateway at the end of the broad street which runs north and south right across the city, passing close to this Mission. (*Mun* means gate.)

Happily the soldier on guard at this gate had not received any of those inconvenient oft-changing orders, which have already so aggravated us at several turns, so we were not molested, and ascending by an inclined plane, found ourselves at the base of the huge keep, one of the many watch-towers which give such peculiar character to this gigantic wall—a wall which is about 50 feet wide on the summit, and measures 88 feet in thickness at the base. This width, however, is not uniform, the western wall not exceeding 30 feet on the summit. Then there is the additional width of the inner and outer parapet wall—the latter is 6 feet high.

Imposing as these castellated walls and towers appear when seen through the dust-clouds, a closer inspection proves that they are not built of stone, but of large grey bricks (about 20 inches in length by 9 in width)—so that, after all, these enormous bastions are just the universal dust in a baked form!

Although for once we had reached a level somewhat above its

hateful influence, we none the less beheld this curse of Peking in full action, for while from the outer face of the wall we looked down on the desert of dust stretching on each side of the broad highway, where long caravans of heavily laden Mongolian camels trudged to and fro, or crouched beneath the shadow of the walls, we had but to take up a position above the great gateway, in order to look straight up the broad busy street, where all day long crowds of men and beasts had been stirring up stifling dust-clouds as they hurried to and fro beneath the blazing sun.

Only when thus seen from above, is the actual width of this or any other main street of Peking visible. The street is really about ninety feet wide, and right down the centre runs a slightly raised causeway, which is the Imperial highway, all of which sounds as if it should be handsome, but this is by no means the fact. The houses on either side are mean-looking one-storeyed brick buildings, and though some have handsomely carved and much-gilded wooden fronts, even these are so begrimed with the mud of many winters and the dust of many summers, that they do little to enliven the general dreariness, unless you are close to them.

On the other hand, the great width of the streets defeats its own object; for the people, nowise appreciating such magnificent distances, establish rows of locomotive shops and booths on each side of the central causeway, while another row of similarly temporary booths is erected facing the permanent shops. Consequently no one on the street ever sees more than one side of it at a time.

The true street has a moderately ornamental wooden frontage, and a close inspection shows some of the shops to be really highly decorated with very elaborate designs; but though, as I have said, these were once resplendent with gold and scarlet, they are now so dingy and dirty as scarcely to look out of keeping with the rag-fair opposite. The fact is, that in so variable a climate as this, all gold quickly tarnishes and wears away, and it is rarely renewed. From these carved fronts project gigantic poles with dangling signs representing the trade of the owner, and gilded dragons uphold very varied sign-boards. Of course, the shops are all entirely open to the street, glass windows being unknown luxuries.

Most of the temporary booths are just a framework covered with matting, in which are sold all manner of articles—ready-made clothes, candles, books, fans, but especially food of all sorts, and birds in cages. On the whole these extemporised side-streets are rather suggestive of Seven Dials, with this difference, that during this very hot weather a large proportion of the usually much-

clothed Chinese population wear only a short pair of trousers upheld by a cloth twisted round the waist, and go about bare-shouldered and bare-headed, their polished skulls gleaming in the sun, and their long plaits tied up in a knob at the back of the neck. Many, however, wear wide straw hats, and all without exception carry a fan. Poverty can scarcely be so dire as to compel a man to dispense with this necessary of life, which, if he is otherwise undressed, is stuck into his waistband. To whatever grade a man may belong, he must have his fan. The bearers of the sedan-chair fan themselves as vigorously as its occupant—men on horseback, coolies resting with their loads, shopkeepers waiting for custom, all help to produce a little stir in the hot, still air. All this certainly does not sound much like Seven Dials, for though I have seen its inhabitants gasping for air on stifling summer nights, the luxury of the fan has no place there! On the other hand, many of the Mongolians and Tartars, unshaven and wearing fur-trimmed felt caps, quite carry out that ideal.

The central roadway is reserved for cart-traffic, which plies ceaselessly, summer and winter, on the paved road. This, being never repaired from one year's end to another, is all in the same atrocious condition as the road from Tung-Chow, and all others, both within and without the city.

But occasionally it is announced that on a given day the Emperor will come forth from his seclusion and pass along certain streets. Then the whole of the extemporised shops disappear as if by magic. A squad of men are put on—not really to repair the road, but just to shovel all the dust into the holes and ruts, till the whole is perfectly level, so as to allow of one procession passing over it without a jolt (and till it has passed, not a foot is permitted to tread the Imperial carriage-road). Then every shop along the streets thus honoured is closed, and all access from side-streets is carefully barricaded. Sometimes even a high screen of yellow cloth is fastened on poles all along the road on each side, lest any rash subject should venture to look upon the "Son of Heaven," who is thus deprived of the interest of even seeing his own people in his own streets.

After a general survey of the surroundings, I took up a very commanding position in an embrasure at one of the projecting angles of the wall, from which I obtained a capital view of one of the principal bastions, and four of the great watch-towers overlooking the outer and inner entrance to the Ha-ta-mun. Such strange, picturesque buildings, with several tiers of tiled roof, and

what appear like four storeys of square windows, which really are ports for cannon, but these are concealed by movable doors, on which are painted black and red circles to represent the muzzles of big guns. From this point one gets a really grand impression of the walls and towers, with the camels' camping-ground below, and the heavily laden carts and shouting coolies, and occasional processions appearing and disappearing into the tunnel-like archway at the base of the great wall, which is the outer gateway.

The embrasure into which I had to squeeze in order to secure my sketch was so narrow that it really was working under difficulties, so I had to be satisfied with a very careful drawing and but little colour—in truth, but for the relief of a hazy blue sky, a few trees, and the bright green tiles edging the brown roof, the only colouring consisted in varieties of dust-tint, with a sort of general mystery derived from dust-clouds, gilded by the rays of the setting sun.

You will think I tell you enough and to spare concerning Peking dust—but no wonder!! Only be thankful you have not to inhale it by throat and nostril—to find your hair and clothes all powdered with it! For it is no ordinary dust to be classified as clean dirt! very much the reverse—it is the sun-dried pulverised filth of the whole city, which day by day, as the centuries roll on, becomes more and more unclean, and is never purified. It is not a nice subject to touch, but I cannot give an adequate idea of this capital of the North without just saying that, as there is no provision for household sewerage, the open streets are the receptacles for the most horrible filth, and scavengers go round the town with buckets on their shoulders, carrying small shovels with which to collect manure for their fields.

I do not mean to say that the city is without drainage—on the contrary, there is a very elaborate and complete system of underground drains, built of large bricks, and covered with large stone slabs. These are opened and cleared every spring, after the winter frosts break up, and before the violent summer rains are due, otherwise the city would be flooded—and when once they are opened, they are allowed so to remain for weeks, forming a very unnecessary addition to the dangers of locomotion in the streets.

As the municipal system of watering the streets is on an exceedingly limited scale (namely, the few buckets of drain-water brought by the road-police to water the main thoroughfare), each householder supplements their work by watering that section which is before his own door every evening at sunset. But water is not a

free birthright of the citizens of Peking; for though the supply, such as it is, is abundant (though in the eastern part of the city it is so brackish that all who can afford such luxury have a daily supply of drinking-water brought by carts from distant wells), most of the shops and small houses are without any, and must purchase what they require from water-carriers, at the rate of about two cash (*i.e.*, about a farthing) per bucket.

It is therefore evident that clean water is far too precious to be thus wasted, so a truly dirty economy is practised, and at the moment of sunset all the slops are brought out from every house in buckets, and are sprinkled over the highway with long ladles. If there is any stagnant sewer, drain, or pond within reach, no matter how foul its waters, a few extra buckets are drawn from thence, and the happy population, who seem totally devoid of all sense of smell, rejoice in the sudden cessation of the suffocating dust. But in truth there is little to choose between the two evils, for the appalling odours which pervade the whole city during this process are not only sickening at the time, but suggest only too vividly the nature of the dust which, under the morrow's sun, we shall again be compelled to incorporate! Talk of eating a peck of dirt! those luckless Europeans whose lot is cast in Peking must get a good deal more than their share, for, happily, never have I seen any other city whose filth and foul smells equalled those of this great capital.

The miracle is to see how these people thrive on the poisonous atmosphere which they must for ever inhale, and which makes us positively sick. In the narrowest, most crowded streets, where the air is most pestilential, these people look just as fat and healthy as in the open country, even where there are foul open drains under their windows. They are at least spared the danger of subtle drain-poison, for their ugly Giant Stink stalks unrebuked in open day. And yet, though these people have been inured to this condition of things since the hour of their birth, and therefore do not appear conscious of it, there is no doubt that the prevalence of sore eyes and disgusting skin-diseases, to say nothing of smallpox and typhoid epidemics, must be greatly due to the general dirt and all the foul smells which pervade every corner.

(Speaking of smallpox, I think that oriental phraseology may be said to have reached its highest capabilities in the selection of four characters which are inscribed on a board and hung outside of every house in which there is a virulent case of this loathsome disease. "First-class heaven-flowers" is the euphonious description given!)

Of course the dirt which is so apparent in the streets reigns rampant in the houses, the habits of the people being intrinsically unclean. At meals they throw bones and scraps of food on the floor, and spill grease, but never dream of sweeping out the room, except perhaps just the middle, while the accumulated filth finds safe quarters in the corners and under the furniture. Even in the houses of the rich, the annual cleaning is limited to rubbing up dingy furniture and pasting clean paper over dirty windows. Then all through the long winter, personal washing is limited to rubbing the face and neck with a flannel wrung out in hot water, but as to clothes, they are never changed day or night. A succession of thick wadded garments are heaped on one above the other as the weather grows colder, and they are cast off one by one with the return of spring.

The thought of that winter is to me one of the strangest problems of Peking. To see it now sweltering in this overpowering heat, and yet to know that only two months ago it was a frozen land, effectually isolated from the rest of the world by an ice-bound river, and that the people who to-day "canna thole their clothes" were then going about like locomotive pillows of fur and wadding, carrying tiny brass stoves folded within their ample sleeves, to act as muffs, and keep their hands from freezing! I have seen these for sale in the shops, but in this broiling heat it seems a grievance even to light a fire for necessary cooking!

And then to think of the melting snows and the flooded sewers, when, in place of dust, the streets are a sea of black fetid slime, and filthy beggars drive a thriving trade by carrying their richer neighbours on their backs across the pools which accumulate wherever a subterranean drain is choked!

And yet the residents here find compensation in the pleasant, though too short, spring and autumn, when they escape to the hills, and even in winter a skater finds consolation on the frozen canals. I am told that although the long frosts are so severe, the snowfall is comparatively moderate, and only occurs in December and January. This is the only Heaven-sent moisture which lays the dust during the nine months from October to June inclusive. All the rain of the year falls in July, August, and September.

Being on the inside of the huge Gateway, and therefore in no danger of being locked out at sunset, we were able to remain on the walls till the street-watering was over, and so gained impressions of evening street-life as we walked home in the twilight. Of these, the most curious were the second-hand clothes auctions at

the open booths, where the stallmen were rapidly turning over their wares, and shouting out their price at the top of their voices —such a gabble! But noise and din and incessant chatter are marked features of all street-life here—every one volunteers his opinion as to whatever business his neighbour has on hand, and the voices of the crowd are neither sweet, gentle, nor low! Very much the contrary, especially when, as is usually the case, their loud shrill wrangling has reference to some infinitesimal sum of money; for here, just as in India, a squabble over a few farthings seems a source of positive enjoyment!

Then there is the incessant din of street-cries, while, as a deep bass to these, comes the grunting chorus of the coolies who, in the middle road, are urging on their heavily laden carts, and the lighter rattle of a never-ceasing stream of the terrible springless carts which take the place of cabs and carriages for great mandarins as for humbler folk; the very highest nobles, however, prefer the slower dignity of sedan-chairs. Riders on mules and donkeys go jingling along to the music of their own bells. Clearer and most melodious is the tinkling of the square bell which hangs from the neck of the last camel in those long files which now and again move slowly up the street, with soft silent tread and gliding movement. Some are laden with tea, others bring fuel for the city—a compound of clay and coal-dust made up into balls, which, being burnt in common portable stoves made of clay, iron, or brass, give out much heat. (Would not these be a comfort in our own homes when the dull light of wintry days makes us draw close to the window while craving for the fire-heat which so uselessly escapes up the chimney?)

But, strange to say, though there are vast seams of coal in the mountains, within fifty miles of Peking, it is so expensive here, on account of the carriage on camel or donkey back, that it is almost cheaper to burn coal brought from England, Australia, or Japan![1]

As we slowly made our way along the crowded street, we noticed various amusing incidents. At one place we passed some mountebanks whose buffoonery called forth loud laughter; at another, a denser crowd tempted us to press forward to see the object of special interest, and lo! it was a Chinese "Punch and Judy," of much the same character as our own. From one street-hawker I

[1] Thanks to the progressive energy of Li-Hung-Chang, the coal-mines at Kaiping are now in full working order, and their produce is conveyed by rail to Tien-tsin, whence it can be cheaply carried to Peking by water.

bought a number of fans for some incredibly small sum—not for their beauty, but for their oddity, some having printed maps of Peking, to me incomprehensible, and other most intricate illustrations of ancient Tartar history, without any colour — simply designs.

But at this hour the open-air cook-shops plied the busiest trade. Some are shaded by huge umbrellas, beneath which are spread the dressed dishes, to which a thick sprinkling of dust does duty in lieu of pepper. There are street-ovens wherein all manner of pies are baked—strange compounds of unknown animal and vegetable substances, which nevertheless really smell rather inviting, — at least, they would do so were it not for the ever-present, all-pervading fumes of tobacco and opium, the one coarse, the other faint and sickly. These, mingling with all the other smells, do not produce an appetising atmosphere!

Bean-pudding in a crust of mashed potatoes, fried in oil, seemed to be in great demand, as also little pies of vegetables, and nicely boiled sweet-potatoes. We watched the owner of a portable oven dispensing these to a hungry circle, on receipt of some absurdly small coin, while many other men supplied them with hot tea. Various preparations of Indian-corn flour were also in favour, especially when baked in the form of tarts, with a little dab of treacle; there was also an enormous consumption of cakes of ground millet, and of flour cakes sprinkled with scorched sesamum seed. Instead of the invariable rice of the Southern provinces, wheat, flour, and maize are largely used; also sorghum, a grain which grows to a height of ten feet. As to what we understand by bread, it does not exist, the substitute being heavy dumplings of flour, which are steamed instead of being baked. They are not bad, however, when toasted.

But the favourite food here is a cake made of bean curd. Common small beans are ground between two granite millstones like a hand-quern. As the upper stone is turned, water is poured on, and a creamy white fluid oozes out, which flows into a tub, and is boiled with salt. The froth is skimmed off, and the curd is tied up in a cloth, put under pressure, and so formed into square cakes, which really taste rather like our own curds. They are generally, however, fried in oil, or else eaten with soy, which is a sauce obtained from the same bean when fermented. There is also an immense consumption of macaroni, which is made by kneading a thick dough of wheat-flour, rolling it into very thin stiff sheets, and cutting these into narrow strips, which, when

boiled, do look rather like macaroni. This is eaten hot with chillies, and you see men swallowing yards of it, very much like the Neapolitan beggars, except that these use chop-sticks instead of fingers.

Some of these street-stalls drive a roaring trade in this hot weather by the sale of various iced drinks, those most in favour being slightly acidulated. A good drink costs about one farthing, which is certainly not extravagant! The seller invites custom by clanging together two brass saucers, which sound like castanets. Such an abundant supply of ice in summer is at least one point of consolation for so variable a climate as this.

Every now and again, among the curious vehicles dragged noisily along the street, came a gigantic wheelbarrow, laden with wicker oil-jars. It seems that the manufacture of oil from the yellow and white pulse bean is one of the great industries of Northern China, and thousands of junks are annually employed in transporting the oil and bean-cake to the Southern provinces. The beans are first crushed in oil-mills, whose revolving stone wheels are turned by bullocks. Some mills are so large as to employ about sixty bullocks. The beans are then steamed, and when very hot are (by a somewhat elaborate process) subjected to great pressure, whereby the oil is expressed. It is filtered through a cloth, and is then generally poured into large jar-shaped baskets, each made to contain a hundred pounds of oil. They are lined with tough paper, which is glued to the wicker-work by a strong varnish, and is quite oil-proof. The narrow mouth of the jar is then covered with the same varnish-paper, and no further packing is required even for a sea voyage. The oil, which is clear and pale, is used both for lamps and for cooking purposes.

The bean-cake which remains after the oil has been expressed is used as manure for the land, but is never given to cattle, who, however, are largely fed on the bean itself. As the aforesaid very popular pulse curd and soy sauce are both prepared from the same bean, it must be allowed that it holds an important place among the vegetable products of the land.

One thing that certainly impresses one in going through a Peking crowd, is the fact that these Northerners are a very much finer and more stalwart race than the delicate-looking pale men of the South. The average height is greater, and they appear stronger and more healthy. Instead of the invariable transparent complexions, I here see ruddy faces which would not discredit sportsmen on Highland moors. I am told that this difference is partly due

to climate, South China being almost tropical, whereas here, however great may be the summer heat, there is always the reaction of a bitterly severe winter with a thermometer frequently below zero, which, however unpleasant, doubtless braces up life's energies.

There is also a marked difference in the feeding of Northerners and Southerners, rice, fish, and very weak tea forming the staple diet of the masses in the South, while those farther North subsist on more nutritious grains, more generous drink, and a much more liberal proportion of animal food.

Saturday, 14*th*.

This afternoon Dr Edkins took me to see some of the popular temples in the neighbourhood. First we went to that of the God of War, then to the healer of sore eyes, whose shrine is adorned with countless pairs of spectacles, all of the ponderous Chinese type, but some are gigantic. As to the ex-voto tablets, they quite overflow the premises, and have to be stuck all over the adjoining buildings. In one temple reigns a group of three goddesses, the central goddess clasping a child, and those on either side seated on golden lotus-blossoms. These are provided with many arms, from which are suspended scores of artificial eyes which, like the huge spectacles, have all been presented by grateful patients as thank-offerings for the cure of ophthalmia or other eye-diseases.

Some of the gods certainly receive very odd offerings. Nĕn-chang, the God of Literature, who helps students to acquire classical knowledge, is supposed to delight in onions, and his altars are so freely supplied with bunches of these unfragrant bulbs as to lead one to suspect that his priests must have a private sauce factory!

Dr Edkins tells me that at a temple which he visited at Woo-tai, in the mountains, he noticed an image of the god Manjoosere, which was almost hidden by the multitude of small silk handkerchiefs presented by his worshippers. As this particular god is represented in that one temple by ten thousand figures, ranged in tiers round the great building from the floor to the ceiling, in the endeavour to depict the multitudinous forms which he assumes in his anxiety to do good to mankind, it really is fortunate for his worshippers that only one of these incarnations claims these silken offerings!

Those mountains literally swarm with the priests and temples of all manner of gods, as do also the nearer hills, which are within four hours' ride of Peking. One specially fine group is known as the Monastery of the Azure Clouds, and in one of its many temples

are ranged 3200 small gilt images, 1600 on each side of the great hall! In another there are 500 colossal gilded figures of the Lohans.

But without going beyond the walls of Peking there are such innumerable temples to all conceivable gods, demi-gods, heroes, and spirits of earth, air, fire, and water, storm and tempest, mountain and stream, that even a list of them would become tedious, and the multitude of idols of wood, stone, clay, porcelain, earthenware, copper, bronze, marble, and every other available material, simply takes one's breath away, especially when coupled with the thought that each one receives a sufficient share of worship and offerings to secure the support of temple and priests! Here, as at Canton, one of Buddha's temples is adorned with no less than 10,000 images of that excellent man. They are ranged on small brackets all over the walls, and even on the beams and pillars of the roof.

Observing a crowd at one point, we drew near to see what was going on. We heard an *improvisatore* singing an interminable song in a hard shrill voice, now bass, now falsetto; he kept his head thrown back and the mouth very open, and as he sat there fanning himself vigorously, he certainly looked irresistibly comical, and evidently his song was also very funny, for he kept his audience in convulsions of laughter. He was accompanied by a musician playing on a two-stringed guitar, only capable of producing three notes, so that variety could only be produced by the number of times that each string was twanged.

Amongst the bystanders I noticed several very old men with brass balls in their hands, which they kept in continual movement. I thought at first that they must be practising some act of mechanical devotion, like turning the Thibetan prayer-wheels, but I learnt that the object in view is to keep the fingers supple, and avert paralysis and the stiffness which is attributed as much to inactivity as to old age.

We purposely prolonged our stroll till darkness closed in, for I always enjoy a nocturnal prowl in any oriental city. Notwithstanding dirt and bad smells, and surroundings of squalid misery, one gets such picturesque glimpses of dimly lighted interiors and characteristic life. Here, however, the lighting is so dim as to be depressing. The gaudy and attractive Chinese lanterns seem to belong to the richer folk or to be reserved for festivals, for in the homes of the poor a wick floating in a dirty bowl of oil alone sheds its feeble glimmer. This is varied by the dingy light of a smoky candle made of mixed wax and tallow on a very thick wick, which

requires continual snuffing (with the fingers!) No candlestick is used, these primitive candles being stuck on a bit of wood. They are really made for use in the pretty paper lanterns.

Every now and again the sickly smell of opium told us that we were passing one of the dens in which wretched sickly-looking beings were lying, half naked, on heated platforms of hard brick, seeking or enjoying their dearly bought temporary delirium.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

MEDICAL MISSION-WORK.

The London Mission Hospital—Interior of the gods—Extraordinary precautions after amputation—Lack of nurses—Artificial eyes—Government College—Epidemics—Sir Harry Parkes—Suicides—Opium Refuge—Medical view of opium-smoking *versus* tobacco—Sketch of the opium-difficulties—Portuguese opium—Suicidal growth of native opium—Chinese Anti-Opium League — Failing commerce — Nemesis — Opium-smoking introduced in America—And in the Colonies.

The heat is so overpowering that I am indulging in a peaceful day of rest within the precincts of this very interesting group of old Chinese buildings, now so happily adapted to the Christian uses of a Medical Mission and a comfortable home.

The house itself must always have been that of a wealthy citizen, as it is laid out with stone-paved garden courts, and the rooms are decorated with much ornamental wood-carving and open lattice-work.

But the interest centres in the adjoining building, which was previously the Temple of the God of Fire, but was purchased by Dr Dudgeon as a suitable building in which to establish a hospital for the gratuitous healing of all comers. This truly merciful work was commenced in Peking by Dr Lockhart (also of the London Mission), who was admitted to Peking in 1861 as Surgeon to the British Legation, and very soon was able to establish a hospital in a building adjoining the Legation, thus laying the foundation of a Medical Mission.

There he was joined in 1863 by the Rev. Joseph and Mrs Edkins, and in the following year by Dr and Mrs Dudgeon, to whom Dr Lockhart made over the work. The building then in

use was required for the Legation, and as by this time the blessings of the foreign hospital were fully appreciated, no objection was made to the deposition of the Fire God and of all the other images, which indeed were sold with the temple. So the wooden and gilded idols were disposed of as saleable curiosities, and the brittle gods of mud were most unceremoniously destroyed, revealing in some cases that a pitiful fraud had been practised by their makers, or that some sacrilegious robber had already ransacked the poor gods in search of hid treasure, for in place of the lump of silver which ought to be found inside of an idol, there was only a lump of pewter and a few copper cash!

I do not know whether the devotion of the modern Chinese tends to such lavish liberality as that of their ancestors, but these certainly gave good proof that their offerings were not made "to be seen of men," inasmuch as the innermost recesses of the ancient idols were enriched with priceless gems and precious metals. This was done in the belief that as nothing was hidden from the gods, they see what is inside; and to assist them in so doing, a brass mirror is sometimes placed within, with an invocation to Buddha attached to it written on silk in Thibetan, and wound round a stick.

Dr Dudgeon has given me a most curious and interesting account of the contents of some of the idols he has examined (generally when in process of demolition). He says, "They all contain viscera"! He has found the various organs of the chest, heart, lungs, abdomen, and intestines in general, all accurately figured according to Chinese notions of anatomy. These were generally made of silk or satin, which, though probably several hundred years old, looked quite fresh. The heart is made of red silk, the veins proceeding from it being of variously coloured silk thread. To it are attached the aforesaid mirror and scroll prayer. Some of the intestines, though made of silk, have an edging of cotton stitched round them. The bowels are all enveloped in a large piece of silk or satin, with another Thibetan invocation of Buddha; in short, all internal arrangements are most carefully represented!

Now the platform whereon were formerly ranged the great bronze or gilded images is transformed to a table for hospital uses, where anatomical knowledge of a very different order is applied to the cure of all comers. Good accommodation is provided for a certain number of in-patients, and day by day crowds assemble as out-patients to be healed of all manner of diseases, which the doctors of China have failed to conquer. In place of idols and of writings in their praise, the walls of the temple are now hung with tablets

and scrolls presented (after the manner of the country) by grateful patients, who thus extol the skill by which they have been cured of sore diseases.

Some of these are the offerings of great men, who have begun by consulting the foreign doctor secretly by night, with every sort of device to prevent its being known that they had done so—trying in the first place to extract prescriptions by simply sending a confidential messenger, instead of granting an interview. But when at last the ice is broken, and confidence is won, then the relations become most friendly, and the emblazoned tablet which testifies to the foreigner's great skill is sent through the city in solemn procession, with music and banners, proclaiming to all beholders the wonderful recovery of the patient. In almost every case of this sort, the most friendly relations have been established between the family of the grateful patient and those of the Mission, and thus the social barriers which had appeared almost insurmountable have melted away, and many real friendships have been established.

Nor is this the only good effected. The great outer hall, capable of holding about 400 persons, serves at once as waiting-room and chapel, wherein the simplest truths of Christianity are daily preached, either by members of the Mission or their native assistants, to the waiting crowds, who literally besiege the dispensary. A considerable number of those who by this means have first heard Christian teaching have eventually declared themselves converts, and have well proved their determination to stand by their convictions.

Considering that an average of 15,000 patients are treated at this dispensary every year, and that the majority return very often, and are generally accompanied by friends, it is evident that an enormous number of persons must be reached through this agency.[1] And as similar hospitals have been established at Tien-tsin, Hankow, Hangchow, Shanghai, Ningpo, Amoy, Swatow, Canton, Hong-Kong, and various other cities, the amount of real good effected by their means is incalculable, thousands of sufferers having come from villages and country districts far inland, to be healed of their diseases, and in many cases have carried home with them the good words of comfort which had cheered their own hearts.

[1] The total number of dispensary patients treated at this hospital in Peking (*reckoning each once*) was—in 1879, 19,606, and 63 in-patients; in 1880, 13,532; in 1881, 22,578; in 1882, 10,150; in 1883, 10,237. Besides these, there is an annual average of at least 1800 patients per annum, who, having been treated privately or at irregular hours, are not entered in the hospital books.

The American Methodist-Episcopal Church also has a Medical Mission here, in charge of a Lady-Doctor,[1] and the Roman Catholic Sisters have one, which, however, is also a refuge for the destitute. The patients there treated are chiefly females.

It is scarcely possible for any one unacquainted with the depths of Chinese prejudice and superstition, to understand what extraordinary precaution must be observed by the foreign doctor who hopes to do good and win the confidence of the people. To order even so simple a remedy as a bath for a sick child (even a warm bath) would be considered monstrous by these people, who *never* wash children, but only give them a rub over with a flannel wrung out in hot water. Though vaccination is now immensely appreciated, and practised by specially appointed vaccinators, these would deem it madness to operate in winter.

The greatest care must be taken not to undertake cases which are really hopeless, as the last doctor consulted is sure to get the credit of causing the death of the patient; and especial pains are taken to remove dying patients from the hospital, and restore them to their own relations, to avoid the calumnies that would probably be circulated as to the abstraction of their eyes and livers as ingredients for that Elixir of Life in which foreigners are supposed to deal so largely, as also for photographic purposes!

Strangest of all is the precaution (consequent on this same superstitious belief) which restores to each surgical patient whatever limb or portion of a limb has been amputated, that he may take it home, and either preserve it for burial in his own coffin, that he may appear in the spirit-world with an intact body, or else, *to avoid all danger of losing the precious fragment, that he may cook and swallow it, that it may thus become once more an integral part of his body!*[2] Owing to this dread of any mutilation of the body, the Chinese have the greatest horror of amputation, and will only submit to it in extreme cases. Their own practitioners have no surgical knowledge whatever. And yet, notwithstanding this great dread, Dr Dudgeon has had several cases in the hospital, of persons who were suffering from terrible sores, consequent on having cut off pieces of their own flesh to provide an infallible remedy for parents in certain special illnesses![3]

The anxiety to save fragments extends even to teeth. When a

[1] Now removed to Tien-tsin.

[2] I should scarcely have ventured to repeat this statement had I not found it confirmed in the Annual Reports of the Hospital at Peking.

[3] I have already quoted examples of this and other marvellous remedies. See Chapter VIII.

tooth has been extracted, it is deemed desirable to grind it to powder and swallow it. Besides the advantage of thus incorporating one's own ivory (and ivory shavings are a valuable antidote to poison), this is deemed a sure preventive of the development of worms in the other teeth, to which cause toothache is generally attributed by Chinese dentists!

Truly wonderful are some of the native prescriptions which occasionally come to light. For instance, one patient was getting on nicely, but imagined he would expedite his recovery by an intermediate visit to a Chinese doctor, who ordered him a decoction of five centipedes, one frog, calomel, smilax-root, and eight other drugs! the natural result being a very serious relapse. The amount of calomel and vermilion administered by these native practitioners is startling.

One advantage of letting patients carry home such fragments as portions of frightfully diseased bone which have been safely removed, or long-buried needles successfully extracted after native doctors had probed in vain, is that the patient treasures the relic, and it becomes the text of a thousand discourses on the skill of the foreigners, and thus others are attracted from far and near. More especially has this been the case since it became known that they could even make the blind to see, and that cases of cataract of eight and ten years' standing had been successfully treated. So rapidly have patients poured in, that it has become necessary to refuse admission to more than perhaps 250 in a day, from sheer inability to attend to them.

The number of in-patients is necessarily very limited, and is generally confined to serious surgical cases; and herein lies one of the greatest drawbacks of the work—namely, the necessity of allowing patients to live in their own homes, where there is no efficient nursing and no one to attend to the preparation of suitable food, nor indeed any certainty of the medicines dispensed being properly used, or that external lotions may not be taken internally! Here it is that the doctor feels the need of ladies to take charge of such matters and do the work of Sisters of Mercy in the hospital.

This want, coupled with deficiency of funds, effectually prevents the offer of a bed to many a patient whose case it would be satisfactory to watch closely.

A most extraordinary variety of all the ills that flesh is heir to annually find their way to this great hall of healing. Among the characteristics specially worthy of note, one is the very small pro-

portion of common street accidents, owing to the great care with which Chinamen avoid jostling one another. This is especially true as regards all wheeled vehicles, as the drivers of such know that they will be held accountable for any accident that may occur.

Another characteristic, early noticed by Dr Lockhart, was the very large number of cases consequent on judicial torture, even when this took what sounds like the comparatively simple form of so many strokes with a bamboo. But the instrument of punishment is really a flat strip of a bamboo three inches wide and five feet in length, with both edges sharp. The prisoner is condemned to receive from forty to one hundred blows with the flat bamboo, but should he be unable to bribe his torturers, or fail to do so, they inflict this terrible bastinado with the sharp edge with such violence that the thighs are lacerated, and the agonising pain of one hundred blows frequently causes death even in a robust man who has previously been in perfect health. The flesh is so cruelly mangled that gangrene supervenes, and mortification sets in.

Another constant punishment for most trivial offences (frequently applied to native Christians to induce them to abjure their faith) is to beat the victim on the face with a piece of hard leather like the sole of a shoe. This frequently results in breaking the jaw and the teeth, and the face and neck are often frightfully lacerated. Various other judicial punishments result in paralysis, and leave the poor wretch crippled for life.

Among the peculiarities of illness arising from natural causes, are sundry strange cases of tumour, of which every conceivable variety find their way here. Dr Dudgeon photographed one old man as a curiosity—his whole body being covered with thousands of small hard tumours, some of which were as large as a pigeon's egg.

Very severe cases of enormously elongated tumour of the ear commonly occur among women, in consequence of unskilful boring of the ears for ear-rings in childhood. Strange to say, these occur in men also, and point to a most extraordinary superstition—an attempt to deceive malignant spirits by disguising a peculiarly precious baby-boy as a poor unwelcomed little girl. He is called by a girl's name, and is dressed as such, in the hope that all evil spirits will believe him to be "only a girl," and as such, not worth molesting!

Very funny indeed are some of the little symptoms of personal vanity sometimes revealed by the owners of faces which might be

deemed too plain to be worth a thought. Thus a man terribly scarred by the smallpox came one day to entreat the doctor to try and obliterate another mark on his face, which really was scarcely perceptible in the general chaos!

As to the first man who was treated for hare-lip, his delight knew no bounds. The fame of the operation spread far and wide, and the unhappy owners of such came from all quarters to be treated. And so it has been with all manner of other diseases.

Various European surgical appliances have been hailed with unspeakable satisfaction; but the aid to vanity which has been welcomed with the greatest interest and wonder is the glass eye, which savours of the nature of a novel plaything. Chinese genius had not soared above the manufacture of a heavy artificial eye of jade-stone—sometimes made from a species of jade in which red veins occur, the effect produced being that of a diseased eye! These are sold at a temple in this city. But the foreign glass eye was at once accepted as a very superior article.

Even when the health of the city is at its normal condition, the cares of such a hospital as this are serious, and to me it is a source of amazement how Dr Dudgeon gets through his daily work. To begin with, he must personally prescribe for, on an average, 120 hospital patients every morning, besides an extensive outside practice, which includes several of the foreign Legations, and involves driving long distances in the blazing heat, and in the horrible springless carts. Two hours a-day are devoted to translating useful books into Chinese with his students, besides the labour of preparing and delivering his lectures at "The Government College," where he holds the post of Professor of Anatomy and Physiology.[1]

The said college for 150 Chinese students has recently been started by Prince Kung, under the headship of Dr Martin of the American Mission, assisted by several foreign teachers. Tung Wing, the Chief Commissioner, is a Christian, and was educated at Yale College in America. As a still further advance, a party of thirty students have been sent for a term of ten years to Hartford College, Connecticut, there to fit themselves for Government service. Great progress is hoped for when these men come into power—men who, in place of being nourished solely on the dry fungus of Confucian classics, are learned in foreign languages,

[1] Since the above was written various changes have occurred, and Dr Edkins and Dr Dudgeon have both accepted posts under the Chinese Government, where, doubtless, their excellent influence may prove even more serviceable than when directly engaged in mission-work. It is proposed to establish a Medical School in Peking, in connection with which a Government Hospital will prove indispensable.

international law, political economy, physiology, astronomy, anatomy, mechanics, navigation, geology, geography, history, surveying, and a thousand other subjects.

In addition to the regular run of hospital work, every now and then an epidemic breaks out, which adds enormously to its labour. Such has been the recent terrible prevalence of typhus fever, which so closely followed on the famine, and which carried off several of the foreigners who were working so nobly on the Relief Fund, and also of their Chinese assistants. It broke out very severely in this city, and among its victims were three members of the English and American Missions. Dr Dudgeon was amongst those attacked (for the third time), and for some days his life was despaired of.[1]

[1] The same insidious fever has on several occasions sought its victims even within the sanctuary of the British Legation, the deeply to be deplored death of Sir HARRY PARKES being due to a sharp attack of typhus supervening on greatly overtaxed mental energies. It would be difficult to conceive a more pathetic end to a nobler life than the death of Sir Harry within so few months of his being appointed British Minister at Peking. "Time brings its revenges," and the wheel of fortune has rarely turned a stranger destiny than that which led to the man who, in 1860, was almost the first of his countrymen to enter the metropolis, and to do so as a most miserable prisoner, returning thither in 1883 as the revered representative of his Sovereign. A man, moreover, whom the Chinese held in such deep respect, that his most unexpected death was felt to be truly an irreparable loss to Britain; all the more so, following so quickly on that of his loved friend "Chinese Gordon," like whom he was endeared to all around him by the loving-kindness and unselfishness of his nature, while an iron will governed all matters which he deemed were for his country's honour. Well did his later career justify Sir Hope Grant's estimate of the young Englishman whom, in 1860, he described as "a man fearless, clear-headed, and able, with all his wits about him." About the same date Lord Elgin wrote: "Parkes is one of the most remarkable men I ever met; for energy, courage, and ability combined, I do not know where I could find his match."

It was not often that Sir Harry could bring himself to speak of his terrible experiences in the loathsome Chinese dungeons, but he told me all about it one day, as a memory of some awful dream. He told of his first apparently satisfactory meeting with the Chinese plenipotentiaries at Tung-Chow, when he was sent by Lord Elgin to negotiate the preliminaries of a truce, and how on his return on the following day (escorted by several friends who chose to accompany him on so interesting an expedition), he had at once perceived a change in the tone of

An oft-recurring scourge is smallpox, which, curiously enough, is here classed as an infantile disease. It is considered so certain that every one must have it, that hitherto it has been customary to inoculate all children when between four and five years of age. Consequently it is quite a rare thing for a grown-up person to do homage to the goddess of smallpox by wearing "The Heavenly

these great men, who created so many delays that their conference continued for hours, and ere Mr Parkes had finished writing his despatches, the night was so far advanced that, fearing to oversleep himself if he ventured to lie down, he determined to employ the hours before sunrise in inspecting the ground on which it had been decided that the British troops should encamp—an eerie ride alone in the darkness, across the great plain. To his amazement, however, he soon became conscious of the sound of troops on the march, and with the first glimmer of dawn, he perceived that the plain, which on the previous evening had been utterly deserted, was now literally covered with an enormous multitude of troops. He estimated their numbers at 40,000.

At once scenting treachery, he galloped back to Tung-Chow, and might have returned in safety to headquarters, but deemed it necessary to follow the commissioners to demand an explanation, whereupon he and his companions were seized, stripped, beaten, and narrowly escaped instant execution. Then they were thrown into hateful country carts, with their arms so tightly bound that they turned black, and being thus helpless, they suffered double torture from every bump and jolt during the long terrible hours, when, in addition to the blazing heat of an unclouded sun, they were wellnigh suffocated by the clouds of dust stirred up by the thronging multitudes who surged around the cart, to stare at and insult the captives. Throughout that awful day they vainly pleaded for a drop of water to allay their burning thirst; and so slow was their progress that it was near midnight ere, battered and bruised, they reached Peking, where the friends were separated, and Mr Parkes (*whose nerves had been on the rack for upwards of forty hours without intermission*) was thrown into a foul common prison, into which were already crowded seventy-three of the lowest malefactors, murderers, and robbers, some of whom had already been confined for years in this horrible den, the stench of which was of course pestilential, and at nights, when the grating (which by day admitted some air) was blocked up, every moment seemed suffocation.

So intolerable had been the prolonged anguish of the tightly bound arms, that it was literally a relief when the cords were removed and the captives were loaded with chains, one round the body, another round the neck, one on each arm and leg, and all these connected by a main

Flowers." Now, however, the advantages of vaccination are so highly appreciated that it is fast superseding inoculation.

Of all the varieties of medical work in this country, I think the most distressing must be that of trying to recover suicides, who are a terribly numerous class. It is rare for a week to pass without one such case, and sometimes there are several within the week; and all for absurdly trivial causes—such as small domestic quarrels,

chain suspended from a ring on one of the rafters. To this they were fastened so tightly that at first they could not even sit down. Afterwards this was somewhat lengthened. So wretched was the food, that the miserable fellow-prisoners had compassion on a man who could speak Chinese so well, and shared with him their own poor fare. That was the one redeeming touch in the whole terrible story. But by day or by night a jailer never left Mr Parkes' side for a moment. Presently he was removed to an inquisitorial chamber, where he was arraigned before five judges surrounded by executioners with divers instruments of torture, who, however, were satisfied with beating him and pulling out handfuls of his hair.

His knowledge of Chinese customs now proved valuable (from the age of fifteen he had been assistant to the Rev. Charles Gutzlaff, Chinese Secretary to the British Legation), for when his persecutors bade him write to Lord Elgin in Chinese characters, he began by dating his letter from the Court of Punishment or Torture. To this they objected, reminding him that *it was contrary to Chinese good manners to speak of such places!* but as he stood firm, and insisted on dating from the place where he was actually living, they yielded after two days' discussion, and assigned him good quarters in the Kao-mee-ou ; and on his still refusing to write till his friend Mr Loch was brought to share his quarters, this further concession was at last made.

After the lapse of many days of intense anxiety, the English advanced almost to the gates of Peking, and these two were told that they were to be executed on the morrow. They were thrown into a common cart and led to a spot where executions frequently took place. There the cart stopped, and they deemed that their last hour had certainly come. Together they read the Burial Service from a little pocket Church Service, which had already solaced many a bitter hour of captivity. Then, while absorbed in one last prayer, to their amazement they were conscious that the cart was moving on : it passed the gate of the city and again stopped, when they leaped to the ground and ran for their lives. Just as they felt their strength utterly failing, they were thrilled with joy by the sight of an English sentry, and a moment later were in safety in the British camp.

or a wish to spite some one else by getting him into trouble, as being by Chinese law accountable for the death of the person thus aggravated beyond endurance.

Commonest of all are suicides on account of gambling losses. A few years ago, suicide by drowning was the ordinary vulgar method, and inhaling gold-leaf so as to produce suffocation was the refined manner. But now such methods are old-fashioned, and swallowing opium is the approved remedy for all unhappiness, and one which, alas! is now generally at hand. The Chinese believe that persons who have thus ended their lives are really only in a trance, and may be resuscitated at any period within a week. Consequently the foreign doctors are sometimes called in to the most hopelessly cold corpses.

A good many, however, are saved by being taken in time. A native doctor who has been trained by a foreigner at Chefoo, says that in the course of ten years he has succeeded in recovering four hundred cases, but that one hundred have been too far gone ere he was called. It has been estimated that the total number of opium suicides throughout China now averages 160,000 annually!! It is worthy of note, however, that few of these are opium-smokers.

Of ordinary victims of the opium-pipe, a never-failing crowd come day after day, entreating medical aid to break off the chains of the tyrannous habit which so quickly enthrals every poor fool who once yields to its seductions. As, beyond supplying applicants with anti-opium pills to help the sufferer to resist the craving, very little can be done at the hospital, two Buddhist temples have been purchased in different parts of this city, and have been converted into Opium Refuges, each of which is in charge of two native assistants.

Within six months from the time when the first of these refuges was opened, about 350 patients put themselves under treatment, in many cases with good results. Some have been known to continue steadfast for years, and are considered the exceptions which prove perfect cure to be possible. Many more have continued for months under medical care and profess to be cured, but there always remains the fear that they may again yield to the terrible temptation.

Of course, where such tremendous moral courage is requisite in order to overcome a physical craving, every effort is made to induce the patients to seek spiritual help in this great struggle, and very striking is the occasional testimony of the heathen on

this subject. Sometimes, in some remote city, opium victims come crowding round a foreign preacher, entreating him to cure them, and they tell him they have been to the nearest opium refuge, and were cured for a while, but that on their return they were soon as helpless as ever. Then the preacher tells them that though they sought the Christian's medicine, they must have neglected to seek the help of his God. One who was thus addressed turned to his fellows and said, "That is quite true, for some who were in the hospital with us joined the Christians in prayer, and these men have stood firm, whereas we who would not do so have relapsed into our old habits."[1]

The patients at the Refuges are treated with a combination of stimulants, sedatives, and tonics; these soothe the terrible gnawing pain in all the bones, which is one of the many evil effects of opium-smoking. Without such substitutes, it is almost impossible for the man naturally endowed with the most determined will to conquer the habit (a habit which, to begin with, has enfeebled and enslaved the will); and besides, the drug becomes such a physical necessity, that sudden deprivation of it is literally fatal. Dr Dudgeon says that large numbers of men die annually in the prisons from this cause, dysentery and diarrhœa being the almost invariable result.

The habit seems to be contracted with fatal facility. A man who has allowed himself to smoke a couple of hours daily for a fortnight or three weeks, is already a helpless slave; for though he is perfectly aware that he has started on a path of moral and probably pecuniary ruin, he is utterly unable to resist the fatal craving. After four or five hours he becomes restless, then languid, then weak and powerless, his eyes hollow, a burning

[1] These Opium Refuges are likewise valuable as a protest against the odious traffic, and as proof positive that Christian Missions are in no way to be identified with this curse of China. Many such hospitals have been opened by native Christians at their own expense. The Rev. J. Hudson Taylor tells of one congregation of about ninety native Christians, all of whom were converted through the instrumentality of a refuge thus opened by Pastor Hsi. Very naturally he longed to open similar refuges in other towns, but could not for lack of means. One morning, after family prayers, his wife said, "Why are you always praying for Hoh-chau? Why do you not go and open a refuge there?" He replied that this was impossible, as it would involve an expenditure of 30,000 cash—*i.e.*, about £6. The wife said nothing, but on the following morning she brought him a parcel containing her bracelets and ear-rings, her gold and silver hair-pins, and the other objects of jewellery, as dear to Chinese as to all other oriental women. These she bade him go and sell, saying that she could do without them, and he must open a refuge with this money, which he accordingly did. Subsequently a friend asked her if she had not felt it very hard to give up all her ornaments. "Oh no!" she replied, "I was glad! I had taken the LORD JESUS for all, and is HE not enough to satisfy any one's heart?"

sensation in the throat, the mouth foamy, and griping internal pains commence, which can only be relieved by a fresh dose of the poisonous narcotic. If this is delayed, the eyes water, giddiness and prostration follow, burning thirst, aching pains in the bones, coldness all over, and (in the case of confirmed smokers) diarrhœa which baffles the skill of the physician.

The habit commenced for pleasure must now be continued solely to allay pain and uneasiness, and to stifle the unnatural morbid craving. With the first breath of the opium-pipe comfort returns —mental and physical suffering pass away—the spirits are exhilarated, cares forgotten, and the smoker is in a dream of Elysium, from which he awakens with renewed craving for the pipe. Day after day the same struggle is repeated, followed by the same inevitable defeat, till the victim knows himself to be utterly powerless, and yields himself a passive slave to the deadly influence. The dose is increased to three or four pipes a-day—eventually the craving is such that the pipe becomes a necessity day and night, and the wretched slave (whose nervous system is shattered, and digestion irretrievably destroyed) becomes daily more sallow and emaciated, more hollow-eyed, more stupefied. Time, wealth, honour, energy, self-respect, are all sacrificed; and when clothes and property have all been pawned, it may be that wife and children are sold to the highest bidder, and the wretched smoker perhaps ends his own miserable life by eating the drug which has wrought his ruin—this, as I have already observed, being now a common form of suicide.

Certainly there are some men who have been known to smoke opium for twenty or thirty years, without being apparently much the worse, and these cases are invariably quoted by those interested in the opium trade, to prove that its effects are not necessarily deleterious, quite ignoring that these are the exceptions, and moreover men originally endowed with an excellent constitution, and possessing the means of always living well.

But as with gin in Britain, so with opium here, the hungry poor are the most inveterate smokers, and so rapid has been the spread of the vice, that notwithstanding official edicts for the suppression of opium-dens, they now exist in almost every lane of this city, and some of the larger lanes have several, answering to the gin-palaces of our great cities, but far more deadly in their results.

Not that the poor have any monopoly of the vice, if it be true, as Dr Dudgeon was informed by one of his patients, that there are

about three thousand opium-smokers within the precincts of the Imperial Palace! He estimates that among minor Government officials about forty per cent smoke; and that about eighty per cent of the male attendants on the families of mandarins, and a considerable number of the women, are opium-smokers. Among soldiers and literary men he reckons about thirty per cent, and in the merchant class twenty per cent.

Although about eighty per cent of the men, women, and children smoke tobacco, Dr Dudgeon says he never has known them to do so in excess, partly because the tobacco used is so mild, and is generally smoked through water. Neither has he found any evil arising from the use of spirits. During his twenty years' residence in Peking he has not seen half-a-dozen people the worse for liquor. But he looks on the use of opium as an unmitigated curse, and one which is spreading with appalling rapidity—so that one-fifth of the population of Peking and Tien-tsin are now its slaves, and even high officials, who a few years ago would have shrunk from its use as a pollution, now smoke openly, and offer pipes to their visitors. In the city of Soo-Chow, for instance, where thirty years ago there were only five or six opium-dens, there are now almost as many thousand!

So enormously has the illegal growth of native opium increased, that it is said it will soon exceed the amount imported. And this is the natural development of that small beginning, when opium was first smuggled into China in defiance of all prohibitions, and then (notwithstanding all remonstrances from the Chinese Government) legalised by a treaty enforced by British guns—a treaty compelling China by the persuasive eloquence of the cannon to sanction our supplying her millions with the POISON which none dares to sell in Britain except it be marked as such.

From first to last the whole history of this traffic is humiliating to all who value humanity and honour. It has been an oft-told tale, but it assumes the vividness of a terrible reality, as I now once more hear it from the lips of men to whose daily efforts to do good it proves such an ever-present hindrance.

It appears that a small amount of opium for medicinal purposes had long been an article of legal import into China; and that the insidious vice of smoking it was already a recognised evil so early as A.D. 1729, is shown by a prohibitive edict issued by the Emperor Yung-Cheng.

The legal import, however, continued till the middle of the eighteenth century, when it was found to have increased to one

thousand chests per annum. In 1796 the Emperor Kea-king awoke to the danger which threatened his people, and determined at once to stamp it out. The import of opium was strictly prohibited, and opium-smoking was declared to be an offence punishable by imprisonment or even death (as it is in Japan at the present day, where by law any person inciting another to smoke opium, or any person selling it, is liable to be executed. Oh wise Japan!)

Nevertheless the insidious drug continued to be smuggled into the country—a proceeding so distinctly recognised as being illegal, that one of the charges against Warren Hastings (the first Governor-General of India), in his celebrated State Trial, was that of being engaged in "a low clandestine traffic, prohibited by the laws of the country."

But greed of gain prevailed, and the smuggling continued till in 1832 a Committee of the House of Commons decided that it was not desirable to abandon a source of revenue so important as the opium trade. Two years later the import had increased to 34,000 chests, and we all know the sequel, and the story of the two utterly unjustifiable wars whereby Christian England not only forced unwilling China to legalise the import of the drug which is ruining millions of her people, but (like a schoolmaster exacting the price of his birch-rod) compelled her to pay heavy war indemnities. In short, in the matter of the opium trade, England has acted precisely like one of those hateful flies which alight on some fat and comfortable caterpillar, and despite its vain struggles, deposit in its luckless body the eggs whence in due time hatches a crop of vile maggots, to prey on its vitals.

The British official conscience has lulled itself, Cain-like,[1] with the assurance of having no responsibility in the destruction of Chinamen, while gaining a solid advantage in the revenue of about nine million pounds sterling, which has annually enriched the Indian treasury from this source. So year after year Britain has turned a deaf ear to every remonstrance from luckless China, or from those who seek her weal.

And yet it is said that so much injury is done by the opium trade to the lawful commerce of China, that it is doubtful whether England does not really lose as much as India gains—a matter which was clearly indicated very early in the day; for whereas, so far back as 1817, China paid British India £2,032,000 for cotton, &c., and only £737,000 for opium, we find that by 1840 these

[1] "Am I my brother's keeper?"

figures had changed to £4,000,000 for opium and only £1,000,000 for all other goods. By 1861 the figure for opium had risen to £9,428,000!

More grievous still for poor China is the suicidal policy which, hoping in some measure to check the import, has led the Government to wink at the enormous and ever-increasing growth of native opium in almost every province of this vast empire. The value of a crop of poppies being double that of a similar crop of wheat, it is perhaps no wonder that individual farmers prefer raising poison to food, so the increase in the aggregate is truly lamentable. Some of the most careful statesmen of China even talk of the expediency of sanctioning its culture, as a needful measure of self-defence, in order to undersell the foreign poison and drive it from the field; and some—sanguine souls!—say they believe that they could then grapple with the domestic evil and stamp it out.

That it is a dire evil no Chinaman dreams of denying—the most inveterate smokers expressing the deepest abhorrence of the vice which enthrals them. It is admitted by all to be a moral crime, which even the smoker never attempts to palliate.

In Southern China a strong Anti-Opium Society has been formed, answering to the Temperance League of Britain. It very soon numbered a thousand members, all men in respectable positions, headed by the Viceroy of Canton, who himself was an opium-smoker, but had the courage to cure himself, and then sent a tablet, expressive of his gratitude, to be hung up in the shop of the druggist whose medicine had helped him to conquer the craving.

In various districts round Canton—numbering 10,000, 40,000, and 100,000 people—this league has succeeded in closing every opium-den. They circulate thousands of papers on the subject, and declare that even now, if England would prohibit the export of Indian opium, they could prevent its growth in China, so strong and unanimous is public opinion on this subject. Whether it really would ever be possible to stem so overwhelming a torrent as that which now floods the market with the too tempting drug is quite another question. The terrible rapidity with which this vice has spread (its extravagance making it the more remarkable in a nation generally so prudent and frugal) shows how great must be its fascination, and therefore how difficult to overcome.

Those who seek to justify Britain's position in regard to the opium trade make capital of such statements as those of Abbé Huc, who, writing of A.D. 1846, says: "*Pendant notre long voyage en Chine, nous n'avons pas rencontré un seul tribunal où on ne fumat*

l'opium ouvertement et impunément." His route lay right across China from Mongolia to Macao, so the inference drawn is that of an extensive native opium cultivation prior to the introduction of Indian opium. Even if this was the case in the Western and Central Provinces, it did not affect the Eastern States, which were the first to be invaded by the introduction of the foreign drug.

Moreover, everything goes to prove that prior to Britain's "Opium War," the domestic cultivation was exceedingly limited; whereas now, though still nominally illegal, in every direction wide tracks of the most rich and fertile land, which should naturally be devoted to silk and cotton, sugar, rice, and corn, are given up to this vile culture—a fearfully short-sighted greed of gain, which has already resulted in most grievous suffering. Our Consul at Shanghai (Mr Davenport) says there is no doubt that the dreadful famine which of late years has scourged the north of China, may be attributed, in great measure, to the spread of poppy cultivation, which, having been found so much more remunerative than that of wheat or other grain, has absorbed a very large proportion of the available ground in those districts. Consequently the granaries were left unfilled, and no provision was made for a year of drought.[1]

In the far north, in Manchuria and Eastern Mongolia, this cultivation has increased enormously, as it is found to pay so much better than growing beans or grain; and in the great provinces of Hupeh, Kuei-chow (which has been described as the Chinese Switzerland), Szu-ch'uen, and Yunnan (the latter the south-western corner of the empire), tens of thousands of acres are now covered with sheets of poppy-blossom—white, crimson, dark purple, or pink, white-tipped—very lovely, though so pernicious. The best opium, and the largest quantity, is yielded by the white poppy; whereas the dark red and purple blossoms produce small seed-pods, and yield an inferior juice of a darker colour. The seed of the former is white or yellow, and that of the more gorgeous but less profitable colours is black or grey, so the cultivator has no reason to sow in ignorance; but while the Indian opium-farmer confines his care exclusively to the white, the Chinaman indulges in occasional fields of red or purple. (The quality of opium, and the consequent satisfaction afforded to the smoker, seems to vary greatly with the soil on which it is grown. A red sandy soil is said to produce very superior opium.)

Beautiful to the eye, but terribly sad, is a journey in early spring

[1] Accordingly, in August 1884, the 'Times' once again had to report that upwards of a million of the agricultural population of North China were starving.

through these provinces, where, with the exception of the flooded lands reserved for rice, and occasional patches of other crops, every available patch of ground on the hillsides or in the valleys is now all given up to the poppy, which lies in broad sheets of snowy white or gorgeous crimson. A recent traveller tells how, in April, he followed up the course of one valley in Kuei-chow for a distance of five miles, the valley being half a mile wide, and in all that distance not another crop was to be seen save an unbroken blaze of purple, scarlet, and white poppy, which even crept up the hillsides and nestled in veins of rich colour in every vale or glen on either side.

A little further he came to a similar valley—then to a third, a fourth, fifth, sixth—everywhere the same story,—only varied by whether half the arable land is reserved for rice, wheat, beans, barley, and tobacco, or whether, as in other valleys, the whole land is devoted to the deadly poison-crop, which grows only too luxuriantly. It is estimated that in these provinces six-tenths of the arable land is actually given over to poppy culture!!

The people affirm that in these districts opium-smoking has only become a habit in the present generation. Now nine men in ten smoke it, and the crude native drug sells at about a dollar per lb. Moreover, this somewhat inferior but cheaper opium now finds its way throughout the Eastern provinces to the very seaboard, so that year by year Indian opium will more and more become simply the luxury of the wealthy; and it only remains for Chinese manufacturers to produce some delicate variety which shall become "the fashion," for the foreign product to receive its death-blow.

It appears, moreover, that Britain will no longer be permitted to monopolise even the foreign opium market, for the Portuguese, attracted by the enormous profits on the Indian drug, have established a company in the Zambesi valley, in Africa, for the express purpose of producing opium for the China market. It is known as the Mozambique Opium Cultivating and Trading Company, and commenced with a capital of about £200,000. It obtained a grant of 50,000 acres of land admirably suited to the cultivation of the poppy, of which selected seed was imported from India, with experienced Hindoo opium-farmers to instruct the Africans in this new industry. The State has conceded to this company the exclusive right to export opium free of duty for twelve years. The first consignment of six chests reached Shanghai in A.D. 1885, and found a ready sale at a high price; so, ere long, African opium may prove a formidable rival to the Indian trade, and a new pur-

veyor of poison for the Chinese, and where once such a traffic is started, who can tell where it may extend?

So between foreign and native competition, there is every prospect that although British opium-dealers may continue still further to lower their prices, this iniquitous source of revenue will fail, and England will realise too late that in compelling China to legalise opium, she has poisoned the goose which might have supplied a never-failing store of golden eggs, in the form of legitimate commerce.[1]

NOTE.—Another danger far more terrible than prospective loss of revenue looms in the possibilities of the future—a danger lest perchance the measure wherewith we have meted may be measured to ourselves. The Chinese are by no means a stay-at-home race. Wherever money is to be fairly earned by honest work, there Chinamen will find their way, and assuredly wherever they go they will carry their vices. Already they have inoculated thousands of Americans with that of opium-smoking. Not only was

[1] The 'Times' special correspondent (August 8, 1884), giving the result of widely extended personal observation on the condition of China, states that—"In imports, there has of late years been a remarkable decrease in Indian opium, *the deficit thereon for the year* 1881-82 *amounting to* £2,850,000; cotton and woollens showed a decrease of £1,500,000. . . .

"The three northern ports in one year show a loss amounting to 27 per cent of their total imports. As regards opium, the native drug has so much improved that it is there driving the foreign article from the market, even though the foreign prices have been reduced from 9 to 24 per cent from those of the previous year. *There cannot be any doubt but that the foreign drug will be driven, slowly perhaps, but steadily, by native competition from the China market.*"

The writer goes on to urge the expediency of a voluntary retreat from so untenable and unpopular a position—a course the wisdom of which has apparently been recognised; for in the spring of 1885 (after prolonged negotiations which have been dragging on during the last six years) the British Government have conceded to that of Ch na the right of exacting that the Li-kin dues on Indian opium shall henceforth be paid IN A LUMP SUM, BY THE PURCHASER AT THE TREATY PORTS to replace the vexatious inland duties hitherto collected with so much trouble. The import duty paid by the importer remains, as heretofore, at 30 taels, as fixed by the Treaty of Tien-tsin.

The concession has been hailed with as much acclamation as if the whole opium difficulty had now been satisfactorily arranged, whereas in point of fact *it is a purely fiscal detail*, NOWISE INCREASING THE TAX ON OPIUM, *but merely affecting the mode of collecting the duties*, which hitherto have either enriched smugglers or the provincial treasuries, but will henceforth go direct to the Central Government, thus "robbing Peter to pay Paul."

The supporters of the opium traffic are triumphant that the Imperial Government should thus acknowledge opium as a large and definite source of revenue, and deem this treaty to betoken a complete change of attitude since the days when the noble Emperor Taou-Kwang utterly refused to accept of a revenue derived from the destruction of his subjects. Those, however, who know China best, and who are in a position to judge dispassionately, affirm that her views on the subject have not altered one whit—the old hateful coercion remains unaltered, and her rulers are only trying to make the best of the evil which they are compelled to endure.

it readily adopted by a large proportion of the low population of San Francisco, where the Chinese are so numerous, but in all parts of the States, and among all classes, the habit is on the increase. Local papers from different parts of America all tell the same sad tale.

So long ago as 1875 the customs return showed that the import of opium into the United States had rapidly increased from a comparatively small figure to 250,000 lb. per annum. Of this not more than one-third was to be accounted for by medical prescriptions. At the present time it is estimated that not only are twenty-five thousand of the Chinese immigrants confirmed opium-smokers, but also that *twenty thousand white men, women, and youths in all classes of society* are regular or occasional opium-smokers.[1] Sad to say, not only does this census include a very large number of college students and literary men (for the most nervous and high-strung temperaments are most susceptible to the temptation), but also an ever-increasing circle of ladies, who are described as "aristocratic."

The Philadelphia press has recently revealed some details of a most luxurious Ladies' Club, in a fashionable quarter of the city, exclusively for the purpose of opium-smoking; and the sumptuous furnishings of such rooms as the "interviewer" was permitted to see, proved that no expense was spared in making the place attractive to "the wealthiest ladies in the city," some of whom the "pale refined-looking" proprietrix claimed as her victims. Of course, where such a club exists in one great city, others will not be slow to follow the example; and the Washington papers have called attention to the recent establishment of regular resorts for opium-smoking in the capital itself.

For persons of refined tastes, the drug is prepared in a most insinuating form—namely, that of a minute cigar only about an inch in length, made of the finest tobacco, which has been thoroughly impregnated with the fumes of burning opium. In this form the drug is inhaled even more effectually than by the ordinary process. These dainty cigars, with a neat mouthpiece, are sold in ornamental boxes, and made as attractive as possible. So the mischief is now fairly started in the United States.

These, however, are by no means the only field for Chinese labour. To our own colonies these diligent workers find their way. On the western shores of our Canadian Dominion—in that British Columbia which ere long must become a possession of

[1] See 'Opium.' By the Rev. John Liggins. New York.

such priceless value to Britain—there the evil thing has entered. Already several of the Indian tribes have been infected by Chinese immigrants with the love of the opium-pipe, and are even more its slaves than their teachers. Who dares to say that it will spread no further?

Then, too, in the Southern Hemisphere. Thousands of Chinamen find their way to our Australian colonies, especially to New South Wales, and already Sydney has to record the dangerous spread of the habit of opium-smoking *among its white population.*

Nor is England herself free from danger. In all our great shipping ports—notably in London, Liverpool, Glasgow, and Cardiff—a considerable number of Chinamen are even now to be found while the vessels to which they are attached are in port. On many of the steamers running between China and Britain the entire service is done by Chinamen, the crew comprising from thirty to forty Chinese as firemen, seamen, stewards, cooks, and carpenters.

Thus it is estimated that the Port of London is annually visited by at least two thousand Chinamen, besides about sixty actual residents, the latter including not only the servants of the Embassy and the men attached to tea-shops, but others who in various parts of Poplar, Shadwell, and Limehouse have established gambling-houses, to which the strangers are attracted by the irresistible fascinations of *fan-tan*—a game of dice and dominoes, over which the players become wildly excited, and often gamble till they have lost the last cash of their hardly earned wages.

But this is by no means the worst evil of these "hells," which openly advertise in their street-windows. in Chinese characters, that "Foreign Opium is sold within." The small low rooms within are subdivided into cubicles arranged like ships' berths, each furnished with mattresses, so that fifty or sixty opium-smokers can be accommodated at a time. As we may well believe that the low population of the shipping quarters does not go out of its way to benefit these strangers (for whom little—so little—has yet been done by any philanthropic agency[1]), it

[1] Two doors are open—one which has for the last twenty years proved a haven of safety to from 300 to 700 Orientals per annum, including an average of 160 Chinamen; but its usefulness is sadly limited by lack of funds, and it is greatly to be desired that a branch home should be established nearer to those docks most frequented by vessels from the East. Contributions will be welcomed by J. H. Fergusson, Esq., treasurer, the Stranger's Home for Orientals, West India Dock Road, Limehouse, London, E. The other open door is that of the Rev. George Piercy of the Wesleyan Mission, who, on his return from thirty-four years of mission-work in China, found ample work of the same sort awaiting him and his

follows that these dens, established for their "benefit" by hardened old opium-smokers, are almost the sole refuge of these poor Chinamen when ashore; consequently (most grievous to relate) many men, previously free from this vice, which they themselves abhor, have actually first become its slaves in London. Not the victims alone, but even the keepers of these dens admit the baneful effects of the drug.

"It is poison," said one—"poison."

"Then why do you use it?"

"Can't help—must smoke."

"But it is injuring you."

"Killing me, killing me; but I must—I must."

Another said—"It is cultivated in our province; but YOU taught us to smoke. You brought it to us; you tempted us; now we love it and grow it for ourselves, and do not need Indian opium."

Almost as a matter of course, curiosity draws a certain number of white men to these dens to try the charms of opium-smoking, and we have seen how quickly experiment becomes habit. In at least five of these dens English women act the part of landlady, and here too English girls of the lowest class have learnt this miserable solace.

Nor are these the only places where the little seed of deadly evil is springing up. Though the subject has not yet fully been inquired into, seven or eight English public-houses in different parts of London have already been discovered, where the customers are served with opium-pipes as readily as with tobacco. Here, then, is "the little pitted spec in garnered fruit," and we all know how rapidly it may spread (a poison ten times more insidious, and a thousand times more pernicious, than gin or whisky). A painful feature of the opium-smoking evil is that each new convert is said to take a morbid delight in converting others, so that fresh recruits are daily brought in.

Since the fourteen years between 1868 and 1882 have produced in America a crop of twenty thousand opium-smokers, how can we hope that Britain will escape? Already the increase in the use of opium in divers forms is startling. The amount of raw opium

wife in London, where, at 92 WEST INDIA DOCK ROAD, they have established mission rooms, which are visited by an average of a dozen Chinamen a-day. They themselves visit the ships, the Chinese boarding-houses and opium-dens, resolved that these visitors to the land which sends missionaries to China, shall not return thence without one loving word of Christian teaching, and once at least hearing the story of the Cross.

imported for consumption in Britain and her colonies in 1881 was 793,146 lb.—*i.e.*, nearly four times the amount consumed in 1860. No one can for a moment suppose that its legitimate medical use has increased in the same proportion, and a note of warning might well be sounded regarding the abuse of narcotics in all classes of society, chiefly in the form of patent medicines.

If, in addition to this evil, a taste for opium-smoking should once gain a footing in England, as it has already done in America, there may be reason to fear lest the poison which Britain has so assiduously cultivated for China, may eventually find its market amongst her own children—a retribution too terrible to contemplate, though one against the possibility of which it were well to guard.[1]

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE SUMMER PALACE.

Review of the Eight Banners—The Great Bell Temple—A primitive Rain Temple—The Summer Palace—Its destruction—Effect on missions—The bridges—Among the ruins—Revolving image-wheels—A cold spring—A Chinese restaurant—The Yellow Temple—A dust-storm—Closing the gates.

Friday, 13*th*.

I AM indulging in a day of comparative repose, being terribly stiff, and all over bruises, as you may well believe when I tell you that yesterday I underwent eight hours of anguish in one of the springless carts, in order to see the ruins of the far-famed Summer Palace—the Yuen-Ming-Yuen, or "splendid gardens." Evidently riding is the only endurable way of getting about in these parts!

The manifold interests of the day, however, far more than compensated for the drawbacks of even dust and bumping, which is saying a great deal! Mr Balfour of the Japanese Legation had kindly undertaken to show me the various points of interest to the north-west of the city, and we agreed to try and escape some heat

[1] In looking over the statistics of opium consumption IN BRITAIN, exclusive of the colonies, I find that whereas the consumption has increased year by year from 112,195 lb. in 1860 to 349,061 in 1883, in 1884 it is reported as only 19,068, a decrease of which I have failed to obtain any explanation.

by starting at 3.30 A.M., at which hour I was accordingly ready, waiting in the courtyard to open the gate. It was a most lovely morning, the clear moonlight mingling with the dawn, and the air fresh and pleasant.

I had full leisure to enjoy it, for the carter who had promised to be at the Japanese Legation by 3 A.M. was wrapped in slumber, and Mr Balfour had to begin his day's work by a two miles' walk to fetch me. Luckily, my carter had been more faithful, so we started in very fair time—indeed, I profited by the delay, for as we passed through the great northern gate, there, on the dusty plain, just outside the walls, we came in for a grand review of the Eight Banners by Prince Poa of the Iron Crown,—such a pretty animated scene! Each corps carries a great many banners all alike, and all these Tartar regiments were galloping about, their gay standards flashing through the smoke of artillery, and the dust-clouds which seem to blend the vast plain with the blue distant hills, and the great grey walls and huge three-storeyed keep.

The latter is that Anting Gate of which we heard so much at the time when it was given up to the British army after the sacking of the Summer Palace—not, however, till their big guns were planted on the raised terraces within the sacred park of the Temple of Earth, all ready to breach the walls.

Prince Poa's large blue tent was pitched on a slightly rising ground apart from the others, and was constantly surrounded by gorgeous officers in bright yellow raiment, with round, flat, black hats and long feathers, who were galloping to and fro, directing grand charges of cavalry. It did seem so strange to see a whole army of ponies, for there are no horses here large enough to deserve the name, unless the foreign residents chance to import any.

These Eight Banners are all Manchus or Mongol Tartars, or at any rate are descended from such, Chinese troops being ranged under the Green Standard. These Eight Banners (which, as I have said, are multiplied), are plain white, red, blue, and yellow, and the same colours repeated and distinguished by a white edge and white spot. These companies are supposed to defend different sides of the city, the colours having some mystic relation to the points of the compass, except that yellow is in the middle, where it guards the Imperial Palace. Red guards the south, blue the north, and white the west, while the east is nominally given up to the Green Standard, which, however, being composed of Chinamen, is not admitted to share in the honour of guarding the Forbidden City. I am told that the Banner Army numbers upwards of a

hundred thousand men, who supply Tartar garrisons for the principal cities of the empire.

The uniforms of the Bannermen are quaint and pretty. They all wear white tunics with loose sleeveless jackets to match their distinctive banner. So there are dark-blue, red, white, and yellow jackets, with trousers or stockings to match, but the latter are not much seen, being concealed by high boots of black cloth. Each division is headed by one large banner borne by a standard-bearer, but a number of small flags are simply fixed into cases, which are strapped to the backs of the men thus honourably distinguished. The effect of these flaglets waving over their shoulders is very odd and theatrical. So, too, are the shields, on which are painted most hideous faces, supposed to be very alarming to the foe.

We got out of the cart and took up a good position on a small hillock, whence we had a capital view. A number of Tartar soldiers who were off duty gathered round, and were quite captivated by the loan of my opera-glasses. Then they showed us their wretched firearms (which certainly did not look as if any European could have superintended the arsenal where they were manufactured), and also their very primitive powder-belts.[1]

A picturesque company of archers rode by on stout ponies, holding their bridle in their right hand, and in the left their bows, the arrows being cased in a leathern quiver slung across the shoulders. As to their swords, instead of hanging from the waist, they are stuck under the saddle-flap. Each man is provided with a pipe and a fan, and his cap is adorned with the tails of two squirrels, which is the correct military decoration. Now, though we Scots are quite ready to believe that blackcocks were created

[1] When such unserviceable weapons figure at a Peking review, we need scarcely wonder at the descriptions we receive of such military defenders of inland towns as foreigners occasionally see called out to overawe riotous mobs!

But that China is truly in earnest in her study of barbarian arts of war, with a view to the defence of her seaboard, is fully proven by the establishment of several extensive arsenals, each fitted with the finest English or American machinery, able foreigners being engaged as instructors, while some young Chinamen have even been despatched to Europe, there to study in the foreign arsenals. It is estimated that a sum fully equal to £2,000,000 was expended on the construction of the arsenal at Foo-Chow, and that the arms and ammunition therein destroyed by the French in 1884 represented a value of £7,000,000.

Nor has China stinted herself in the matter of ironclads, turret-ships, steam-rams carrying heavy guns, an extensive torpedo establishment, modern breech-loading guns, rifles, gun-cotton, and millions of cartridges for carbines. The arsenal at Shanghai is busy with the manufacture of heavy guns; that at Nanking has turned out light field-guns and Gatlings; while Tien-tsin modestly limits its manufacture of Remington cartridges to 8000 a-day, though in case of need it could turn out 20,000 a-day. The daily produce of the Tien-tsin powder-works is from four to five tons of powder, said to be first-class.

for the express purpose of bequeathing their tails to adorn the caps of the London Scottish (the said tails having very much the jovial independent character of the bird itself), it really is impossible to see the fitness of things in selecting poor little squgs as military emblems, unless to suggest the wisdom of "he who fights and runs away!"

Returning to our cart, we next drove to the Ta-tsoon-tsu, or "Temple of the Great Bell." It is a large Buddhist monastery; the priests, who occupy separate houses, are a civil, kindly lot, very different from the Lamas of the Yung-ho-kung! There are curious paintings of Buddhist saints in the halls, but the great object of interest is the huge bell, which is said to be the largest hanging bell in the world. Anyhow, it is a wonderful piece of casting, being nearly 18 feet high and 45 feet in circumference, and is of solid bronze 4 inches thick. It is one of eight great bells which were cast by command of the Emperor Yung-lo, about A.D. 1400, and this giant is said to have cost the lives of eight men, who were killed during the process of casting. The whole bell, both inside and out, is covered with an inscription in embossed Chinese characters about half an inch long, covering even the handle, the total number being 84,000! I am told that this is a whole classic.

This gigantic bell hangs in a two-storeyed pagoda, and a favourite amusement of Chinese visitors to the temple is to ascend to a gallery whence they throw small coins at the bell in hopes of hitting it—on the same principle, I suppose, that they spit chewed prayer-papers at certain gods in the hope of the prayer sticking. The throwing of cash is certainly more profitable to the priests, as the coins become temple property.

This great bell, which is struck on the outside by a suspended ram of wood, is only sounded when, in times of drought, the Emperor in person, or the Imperial Princes as his deputies, come to this temple to pray for rain. Theoretically, they are supposed not to rise from their knees till the rain falls in answer to their prayers, and responsive to the vibrations of the mighty bell.

There is sore need of rain now, so I suppose the bell will be struck ere long. Apparently it is reserved as a last resource, for already the little Emperor and the Empresses-Regent have been pleading for rain in the gorgeous yellow-tiled temple at the entrance to the Forbidden City; and Prince Yeh, as the Emperor's deputy, has been repeatedly sent to pray for rain in a most strange open-air temporary sanctuary close to the Bell Temple.

We discovered this quite by chance. Having observed a large circular enclosure in the middle of a field of standing corn, we halted, and went to see what it was, and found that it consisted of eight screens of the coarsest yellow mats, with great blue dragons designed on them—simple building materials; yet this primitive tabernacle is so constructed as to represent the mystic square and circle which symbolise Earth and Heaven. Four of the screens form a circle, leaving four gaps. The other four are straight, and are placed outside, so as to guard and conceal these entrances. In the centre a square raised platform of earth forms a rude altar, at the four corners of which are four vases of the coarsest pottery, containing plants. Straggling and much-trampled corn grows up between and around these, as in the field outside.

In a small tent close by, we found a sleepy watchman, who told us about the Prince's devotional visits to this very primitive oratory, where he worships Lung Wong, the Dragon King, whose service, by the way, proves not only a very marked respect for gradations of rank, but also curiously illustrates the Chinese principle of not bestowing more honour than is actually necessary, even on a god. In seasons of drought the district ruler presides at a solemn service which lasts three days, when sundry pigs, sheep, and fowls are sacrificed to this Dragon of the great deep. Should he fail to obtain a gracious answer, the Prefect takes up the matter and proclaims a fast, forbidding the people to taste fish, flesh, or fowl till his prayer is granted.

When the Prefect has done his very best, and still no rain falls, then the Governor-General takes his turn, clothing himself in sackcloth, and loaded with chains and fetters. Escorted by the leading men of the district, all in garments of humiliation, he walks (which is the very acme of humility) to the temple or the open-air altar, where he offers incense and burns a written appeal to the great Dragon. Both Buddhist and Taouist priests are present, and join in fervent prayers for rain. Sometimes the Emperor desires the Taouist Arch-Abbot to procure this long-deferred blessing, and if he fails to obtain it, he is mulcted of his revenues, on the same principle that the Imperial doctor is deprived of his honorific button if the Emperor should chance to die!

In some districts the farmers and peasants march in procession to the temple, crowned with garlands of weeping-willow leaves, and carrying boughs of the same. Should the Dragon still prove inexorable, it is thought necessary to rouse him to action, so he is

taken from his throne and set down uncanopied in the blazing sun, just to feel how uncomfortable he is making other people!

The Emperor's care is not confined to the early and latter rains. He must also pray for a good snowfall in the northern provinces, that the earth may be fully moistened, and so prepared to nourish the precious grain.

From the present prolonged drought, there seems reason to fear that "The Dragon Spirit of the Sacred Well" has not been sufficiently grateful for the honorary title conferred on him by the Emperor for past services in this matter.[1]

The ceremony whereby the intervention of the Water Dragon is secured is very curious. When prayers have been all in vain, it is decided that pressure must be put on. The Emperor therefore deputes a special officer to travel to the city of Han-tan, in the province of Honan, and bring thence an iron plate which is kept in a well outside of the town, within the courts of the Temple of the Water Dragon. On this plate, which is six inches long and half an inch thick, is inscribed a petition for abundance of refreshing rain.

When this iron plate (called the Tieh-pai) arrives in Peking (a circumstance which is duly notified in the 'Gazette!') it is reverently placed on the altar in the great temple of the national gods, where it is supposed to act as a key to lock the mouth of the Dragon, which makes him so very uncomfortable that he is quite sure to send rain very quickly, in order to get his troublesome worshippers to remove the iron gag.

It has so happened that on several occasions this ceremony has been resorted to a few days before a heavy rainfall, whereupon the good Dragon gets all the credit, like a spoilt child who has at length done as he was bid. So then the satisfactory result is officially chronicled in the 'Gazette,' and the Dragon is rewarded with a new title and the general repair of his temple. Thus in 1867 his well at Han-Tan was canonised as "The Holy Well of the Dragon God." But when in 1871 he again procured the long-deferred rains, the Imperial edict commanded that another title should be conferred upon the well, which should thenceforth be called "The Efficacious Answering Holy Well of the Dragon God."

After four hours of intolerably weary jolting in our dreadful cart, we arrived at Wan-Shu-Shan, which is the only portion of the grounds of the Summer Palace (the Yuen-Ming-Yuen, or

[1] See p. 394.

"Garden of Gardens") to which foreigners are still admitted, as they have there wrought such hopeless ruin that I suppose it is not thought worth while to shut them out; and truly it is sickening, even now, to look on such a scene of devastation. The park, which is now once more closed to the barbarians, contains fine palatial buildings faced with colonnades, and altogether of a very Italian type, having been built under the direction of the Jesuits; but the beautiful pleasure-grounds, where we wandered over wooded hills all strewn with beautiful ruins, is purely Chinese, and as such, is to me far more interesting.

At the time when the "Barbarian" army so ruthlessly forced their way into this Chinese paradise, it was in the most perfect order, a feature by no means common in the homes of even the greatest mandarins. Forty small palaces, some of carved cedar-wood, brought from far-distant forests, some faced with bronze or porcelain, but each a marvel of art, occupied beautiful sites within the grounds, and were apportioned to the great nobles of the empire. The sheets of ornamental water, lakes and rivers, were all clean, and each marble bridge was a separate object of beauty, while from out the dense foliage on the hill, yellow tiled roofs, curled up at the ends, gleamed like gold in the sunlight.

Within the palaces were stored such treasures of exquisitely carved jade, splendid old enamels, bronzes, gold and silver, precious jewels of jade and rubies, carved lapis-lazuli, priceless furs, and richest silks, as could only have been accumulated by a long dynasty of Celestial rulers.

Cruel, indeed, was the change when the allied forces arrived. The French, taking advantage of a circuitous approach, at once proceeded to sack the palace, ere the British guessed their intention, so when these were allowed to join in the work of devastation and indiscriminate plunder, all the most obviously valuable treasures had already been removed, while the floors were strewn knee-deep with broken fragments of priceless china, and every sort of beautiful object, too cumbersome or too fragile for rough-and-ready removal, and therefore ruthlessly smashed with the butt-ends of muskets, to say nothing of piles of the most gorgeous silks and satins and gold embroidery, which lay unheeded among the ruins.

Although waggon-loads of what seemed the most precious objects were removed, these were as nothing compared with what was left and destroyed, when a week later the order was given to commence the actual demolition of the principal buildings, a work on which

two regiments were employed for two whole days, ere the hand of the destroyer was stayed; and so, happily, a few wonderful and unique buildings still remain as a suggestion of vanished glories.

Of course all this was done with the best possible intention, by way of punishing the Emperor himself and his great nobles for the official deeds of treachery, rather than injure the innocent citizens of Peking. Yet it seems that even these would have accepted any amount of personal loss and suffering rather than this barbarous destruction of an Imperial glory—an act which has so deeply impressed the whole nation with a conviction that all foreigners are barbarous Vandals, that it is generally coupled with their determined pushing of the opium trade, these two crimes forming the double-barrelled weapon of reproach wherewith Christian missionaries in all parts of the empire are assailed, and their work grievously hindered.

Our first halt was beside a well whose waters are so deliciously crystalline and cold that they seemed to our parched and dusty throats as a true elixir. So famous is this pure spring, that the daily supply for the Imperial Palace is brought thence in barrels in a cart flying a yellow flag, with an inscription in black characters, stating that it travels on the Emperor's business—a warning to all men to make way for it. The water near the city is all bad and brackish, so such a spring as this is a priceless boon.

We devoted about three hours to exploring these beautiful grounds, of which might be said—

"Was never scene so sad—so fair!"

Even the ornamental timber was cut for firewood by the allied barbarians, though happily some remains to beautify the landscape.

The grounds are enclosed by a handsome wall of dark-red sandstone, with a coping of glazed tiles, and its warm colour contrasts pleasantly with the rich greens of the park and the lovely blue lake with its reedy shores and floating lotus-blossoms. Into this lake flow various rivers, crossed by remarkable bridges.

Of these the most conspicuous is a very handsome stone bridge of seventeen arches, graduated from quite small arches at either side to very high ones in the centre. It is commonly called the Marble Bridge, because of its beautiful white marble balustrade, with about fifty pillars on either side, on each of which sits a marble lion. Each end of the bridge is guarded by two large lions, also of marble.

It seems that a stone or marble lion, seated on a pedestal, ensures good geomantic influences, and averts calamities from the neighbourhood. Hence these very handsome, though decidedly imaginary animals, are commonly placed in temple courts and elsewhere. Such a regiment as we have here should surely have brought better luck to this garden of palaces!

This bridge connects the mainland with an island about a quarter of a mile in circumference; it is entirely surrounded with a marble balustrade like that on the bridge. In the centre of the isle is an artificial mound on which, approached by flights of steps, and enclosed by yet another marble balustrade, are the ruins of what was once a palace of fairy-like beauty—the scene of gayest revels, when all manner of pleasure-boats floated on the calm waters, while every tree was illuminated by wonderful lamps, shaped like fishes, birds, beasts, fruit, and flowers, and on every rivulet, river, and lake floated lanterns in the form of tiny boats. Everything that Chinese fancy could devise to make the scene truly fairy-like was there.

A very amusing account of some of these Imperial festivities was written in 1743 by Monsieur Attiret, a French missionary, who, with one companion, was carried thither to make drawings for the Emperor. They were conveyed up the river in a closely covered boat, and thence were carried in carefully closed litters, so that when they were turned loose to sketch in this garden of delight, they naturally deemed themselves in Paradise, and were in no haste to leave it.

They found that the Emperor generally spent about ten months every year in this delightful retreat, and they were thus privileged to obtain many glimpses of the Imperial family. Perhaps the strangest of the amusements provided for the Court were mimic fairs, periodically got up in a model town, which (like the elaborate model streets of Old London in our own "Inventories") was built in the midst of the Imperial pleasure-grounds to enable the Emperor and his ladies to form some idea of the streets and shops which they might never behold in real life.

To this end, says M. Attiret, a town was built which should be a sort of miniature of Peking. It was a mile square, and had walls, towers, parapets, battlements, and four great gates. The space within this enclosure was laid out in streets, shops, and markets. There were temples, exchanges, tribunals, even a port of vessels. Here, at stated times every year, a large number of the Imperial attendants were required to assume the dress of

various tradesmen, and enact all manner of scenes of ordinary life —its commerce, marketing, bustle, hurry, and occasional roguery.

Real goods were supplied for sale by merchants in Peking, who counted on finding many good customers, as the Emperor and his ladies alike made good use of their rare opportunities of shopping. One street was devoted to the porcelain shops, another to silken goods, a third to pictures and books. Street-sellers were told off to cry fruits and refreshing drinks; some were employed in driving wheelbarrows, others in carrying baskets. Occasionally there was a well-got-up fight, or a case of deliberate thieving, when the public officers appeared in time to stop the quarrel or arrest the thief, and the offenders were promptly carried before the tribunal and there tried in due form, and probably condemned to be bastinadoed, which sentence was promptly carried out for the amusement of the Emperor, but much to the anguish of the luckless actor.

Another portion of the grounds was set apart to afford a practical illustration of agriculture. It was laid out in fields and meadows, with farm-houses, cottages, oxen, ploughs, and all the necessaries for husbandry. Here, in due season, all manner of grains were sown and reaped, and the Emperor was able to obtain some knowledge of the subject without danger of being seen by the vulgar herd.

Though the general feeling now is one of desolation, as one climbs stairways passing between numberless mounds of rubble, chiefly composed of many-coloured glazed tiles of every colour of the rainbow, nearly all smashed, there are nevertheless some isolated buildings which happily have quite escaped. Among these are several beautiful seven-storeyed pagodas. Of one, which is octagonal, the lower storey is adorned with finely sculptured Indian gods. Two others are entirely faced and roofed with the loveliest porcelain tiles—yellow, gold, bright emerald green, and deep blue. They are quite intact, even the tremulous bells suspended from the eaves still tinkling with every breath of air.

To me the most interesting group of ruins is a cluster of very ornamental small temple-buildings, some with conical, others with tent-shaped roofs, but all glazed with the most brilliantly green tiles, and all the pillars and other woodwork painted deep red. On either side of the principal building are two very ornamental pagoda-shaped temples, exactly alike, except that the green roof of one is surmounted by a dark-blue china ornament, the other by a similar ornament in bright yellow. Each is built to contain

A LARGE ROTATORY CYLINDER, ON THE PRAYER-WHEEL PRINCIPLE, WITH NICHES FOR A MULTITUDE OF IMAGES. In fact, they are small editions of the two revolving cylinders, with the five hundred disciples of Buddha, which so attracted me at the great Lama Temple, as being *the first link to Japanese Scripture-wheels or Tibetan Prayer-wheels which I have seen in China*, and the existence of which has apparently passed unnoticed. It is needless to add that, of course, every image has been stolen, and only the revolving stands now remain, in a most rickety condition.

When we could no longer endure the blazing heat, we descended past what appears to have been the principal temple, of which absolutely nothing remains standing—only a vast mound of brilliant fragments of broken tiles lying on a great platform. Steep zigzag stairs brought us to the foot of the hill, where great bronze lions still guard the forsaken courts.

Parched with thirst, we returned to the blessed spring of truly living water, and drank and drank again, cup after cup, till the very coolies standing by laughed!

Then once more climbing into the horrible vehicle of torture, we retraced our morning route till we reached a very nice clean restaurant, where we asked for some luncheon. We were shown into a pretty little airy room up-stairs, commanding a fine view of the grounds we had just left. After the preliminary tiny cup of pale-yellow tea, basins of boiling water were brought in, with a bit of flannel floating in each, that we might wash off the dust in true Chinese style. The correct thing is to wring out the flannel and therewith rub the face and neck, with a view to future coolness.

Luncheon (eaten with chop-sticks, which I can now manage perfectly!) consisted of the usual series of small dishes, little bits of cold chicken with sauce, morsels of pork with mushrooms, fragments of cold duck with some other sort of fungus, little bowls of watery soup, scraps of pig's kidney with boiled chestnuts, pickled garlic and cabbage, all in such infinitesimal portions, that but for the plentiful supply of rice, hungry folk would find it hard to appease the inner wolf! Tiny cups of weak rice-wine, followed by more pale-yellow tea, completed the repast.

We hurried away as soon as possible, being anxious to visit a very famous Lama Temple, the "Wang Szu" or Yellow Temple. As we drove along, I was amused to notice how singularly numerous magpies are hereabouts. They go about in companies of six or eight, and are so tame and saucy that they scarcely take the trouble to hop aside as we pass.

Though the drive seemed very long, still we never suspected anything amiss, till we suddenly found ourselves near the gates of the city, when we discovered that our worthy carter, assuming that he knew the time better than we did, and that we should be locked out of the city at sunset, had deliberately taken a wrong road, and altogether avoided the Yellow Temple. Reluctantly yielding to British determination, he sorrowfully turned, and we had to endure a long extra course of bumping ere we reached the Temple, which is glazed with yellow tiles (an Imperial privilege conceded to Lamas).

This is a very large monastery full of objects of interest, of which the most notable is a very fine white marble monument to a Grand Lama who died here. It is of a purely Indian design, and all round it are sculptured scenes in the life and death of Buddha. Of course, having lost so much time, we had very little to spare here, so once more betook us to the cart, and jolted back to Peking.

As we crossed the dreary expanse of dusty plain, a sharp wind sprang up, and we had a moderate taste of the horrors of a dust-storm, and devoutly hope never to be subjected to a real one.

The dread of being locked out is by no means unfounded. Punctually at a quarter to six one of the soldiers on guard strikes an iron gong which hangs at the door, and continues doing so for five minutes with slow regular strokes. Then a quickened beat gives notice that only ten minutes' grace remains; then more and more rapidly fall the strokes, and the accustomed ear distinguishes five varieties of beat, by which it is easy to calculate how many minutes remain. From the first stroke, every one outside the gates hurries towards them, and carts, foot-passengers, and riders stream into the city with much noise and turmoil. At six o'clock precisely, the guard unite in a prolonged unearthly shout, announcing that time is up; then the ponderous gates are closed, and in another moment the rusty lock creaks, and the city is isolated for the night.

Then follows the frightful and unfragrant process of street-watering, of which we had full benefit, as our tired mule slowly dragged us back to this haven of rest.

CHAPTER XL.

FROM PEKING TO CHE-FOO.

Pigeon music—Sand-flies—Summer quarters in hill temples—Preparation for a start—Prayers for rain—Ride to Tung-Chow—American Mission—House-boat on the Pei-ho—Stopped by the rain!—Reach Tien-tsin—Salt manufacture.

Saturday, June 14.

It is early morning—the only enjoyable time of the day, before the sun rises high—and I am sitting in the pleasant verandah listening to the pigeons as they fly overhead. This is no dove-like cooing, but a low melodious whistle like the sighing of an Æolian harp, or the murmur of telegraph wires thrilled by the night wind. It is produced by the action of cylindrical pipes, like two finger-ends side by side, about an inch and a half in length. These are made of very light wood and fitted with whistles; some are globular in form, and are constructed from a tiny gourd. These little musical boxes are attached to the tail-feathers of the pigeon, in such a manner that as he flies the air shall blow through the whistle, producing the most plaintive tones, especially as there are often many pigeons flying at once, some near, some distant, some just overhead, some high in the heavens. So the combined effect is really melodious. I believe the Pekingese are the only people who thus provide themselves with a dove orchestra, though the use of pigeons as message-bearers is common to all parts of the empire. (The people of Southern China have, however, devised another method of producing similar plaintively melodious tones, by inserting several metallic strings in the centre of their kites, so that as these fly on the breeze they emit low silvery notes like the breath of an Æolian harp.)

There is one form of insect-life here which is a terrible nuisance—namely, the sand-flies, which swarm in multitudes. They are too cruel; every one is bitten, and the irritation is so excessive that few people have sufficient determination to resist scratching, so of course there is a most unbecoming prevalence of red spots suggestive of a murrain of measles!

I am told that I have been singularly unfortunate in the season of my visit, and that if only I had come in September, I should have found life most enjoyable (I recollect some of the residents at

Aden likewise assuring me that they really learnt to think their blazing rock quite pleasant!) I suppose that I am spoilt by memories of green Pacific Isles and sweet sea-breezes, so I can only compassionate people who till two months ago were ice-bound—shut off from the world by a frozen river—and now are broiled and stifled!

Such of them, however, as can get away from their work in the city, have the delightful resource of going to the hills, and establishing themselves as lodgers at one of the many almost forsaken temples, where a few poor priests are very glad to supplement their small revenues by a sure income of barbaric coin. The Pekingese themselves are in the habit of thus making summer trips to the hills, so many of the temples have furnished rooms to let, with a view to encouraging the combination of well-paid temple services with this pleasant change of air.

I am told that many of these temples are charmingly situated, and have beautifully laid-out grounds. A group called "The Eight Great Temples" is described as especially attractive. They are dotted on terraces along the face of "The Western Mountains," about twelve miles from the city, and among their attractions are cool pools in shady grottoes all overgrown with trailing vines and bright blossoms. Stone fountains, where numberless gold-fish swim in crystalline water, which falls from the mouth of great marble dragons—curious inscriptions in Tibetan and Chinese character, deeply engraven on the rocks, and coloured red—fine groups of Scotch firs, and old walnut-trees, and in spring-time I am told that our dear familiar lilac blossoms in perfection. Then there are all manner of quaintly ornamental pagodas and temples, great and small, with innumerable images and pictures, and silken hangings, and all the paraphernalia so attractive to the artistic eye.

My hostess and her family are just preparing to start for such a temple, which they rented last year in an extremely pretty district. They are so kind as to invite me to accompany them thither; but though I am very much tempted to do so, and to see for myself how the beauty of mountain scenery in North China compares with that of the Southern Empire, I am nevertheless so anxious to get back to Nagasaki,[1] where all my home letters have for some time been accumulating, that I have decided to take advantage of the escort of the Rev. W. Collins,[2] chaplain to the Embassy, who

[1] In Japan.

[2] It was Mr Collins who, in 1860, opened a dispensary for the sick poor at Foo-Chow, where the C.M.S. Mission had been working for ten years without any

is to start for Che-foo on Monday, and kindly offers to make all my boating and other arrangements, which involve a good deal of trouble. My luggage, and such treasures as I have acquired in Peking, are to start to-day, going by cart to the boat at Tung-Chow, whither we purpose riding in the early morning, and thus avoiding a repetition of the hateful cart-journey. Mr Collins kindly lends me a pony, and Miss Chowler lends me her side-saddle.

Sunday, 15*th*.

The morning services in connection with this Mission being all in Chinese, one of the ladies of the party accompanied me to the British Legation, where a very unattractive room is set apart as a chapel. It has not been beautified by any ecclesiastical decoration, and the ordinary table which does duty as the altar is placed in front of a plain glass window, so that one's eyes must necessarily rest on the crude and gaudy scarlet, blue, and emerald green of the recently restored Legation buildings, which I confess is to me distracting. The congregation was of course very small.

This evening there was the usual very hearty service here, at which there was quite a large muster of Europeans, beginning with all the members of the various Christian Missions of all denominations who have been teaching in Chinese most of the day, and here assemble to worship together in their mother tongue. There are at present altogether about thirty Christian teachers in Peking. The form of service adopted to suit all is the Congregational, and each missionary within hail takes an evening by turn, in alphabetical rotation. To-night there were special prayers for rain, as there have been at all the services, English and Chinese, Christian and heathen, for the drought has been so prolonged in these Northern provinces, that now the fear of another famine is imminent. But much as we all hope for rain, I confess I would rather it didn't come down till we reach Tien-tsin!

Now there is only time for a moderate allowance of sleep, as we are to start at 4 A.M.

ON THE PEI-HO, ON BOARD MY HOUSE-BOAT,
Monday Night.

Once more afloat on the Pei-ho, and by no means sorry to have

apparent result, as told in Chapter X. That dispensary proved the means of bringing in the first three converts—first-fruits of the extensive and flourishing Mission of the present day.

Mr Collins's son, the Rev. J. S. Collins, has been now sent out by the men of Trinity College, Dublin, as their own missionary in this same province of Fuh-kien.

seen the last of Peking, though I would not on any account have missed seeing it. I am generally sorry to leave any place where I happen to be, but in this instance my sole regret was parting with truly kind friends, whom, however, I hope to meet again in Scotland.

Punctually at 4 A.M. Mr Collins arrived with the ponies. Dr and Mrs Dudgeon were both up, to give us a very early breakfast, and speed us on our way. The morning air was cool and pleasant, and the dust still lay undisturbed, so my last impressions of the great city were of the best, and there was no bumping to mar the last view of the majestic towers and the venerable walls, outside of which we rode along the desolated dusty waste, where the miserable-looking Bactrian camels were grunting and groaning and remonstrating with all their power against being reladen for another day's toil. How picturesque it all is—the foreground of riders in great straw hats, and the invariable blue clothes which harmonise so well with the general dust-colour!

We again met all manner of curious vehicles such as we saw on the way up, and wretched beggars, including some whose rags had literally dropped off, and had not been picked up again! but we were happily able to avoid the paved road with all its pitfalls, and in so doing we passed patches of water with tall, intensely green reeds, and blessed their fresh beauty. They are grown for the purpose of making mats. At all the roadside villages, an array of buckets of water stand ready for the use of thirsting animals of all sorts, their owners paying the water-men with a few copper cash. It was nearly 9 A.M. ere we reached the insignificant gateway and tumble-down walls of Tung-Chow. We passed a temple thronged with a multitude of people burning incense and praying for rain—such crowds of women tottering on tiny hoofs, and with their hair dressed in a wonderful fashion with huge loops, all stiff and glossy.

We rode direct to the American Mission, where we were most hospitably received, washed, and fed. I was much amused at seeing the two youngest hopes of the family (splendid twin-boys) each securely tied into a baby-jumper, in which they sat contentedly, laughing and crowing at one another apparently in supreme bliss, while at every movement the responsive jumper gave them a little toss, such as babies are supposed to delight in!

The kind mother of the babies had most thoughtfully undertaken to have our supply of meat cooked for us, so as to save us

all unnecessary trouble on our voyage; and as (fortunately) this was not quite ready, I had time to see and hear something of the work of the Mission, and two pleasant American ladies took me to see their boys' school, and other matters of interest. They each have a school for Chinese girls, and also go about among the villages to teach the women, always by invitation.

About noon we started for the boats, and as it is two miles across the city, I rode. We passed through very dusty suburbs and average streets, and everywhere saw small unripe apricots offered for sale—very choleraic-looking!

We found the boats all ready for us, each with its primitive little cabin for one European; and though mine is by no means so luxurious as that in which I travelled up the river, I have made it quite comfortable, and now have time to look about me.

My head boatman is a study for an artist, with his long black plait twisted round the white handkerchief on his head. (*N.B.*—It is not respectful to wear his tail thus coiled up in my presence, but he thinks I know no better, and I sympathise in the inconvenience of letting it hang down!) His bare back and arms are singularly well bronzed for a Chinaman, and his sole article of raiment consists of a very ancient pair of trousers of yellowish unbleached cotton, patched with large pieces of bright blue calico!

This afternoon it really does look as if rain were coming—at least clouds are stealing up over the brazen heavens, and a few drops have actually fallen, as if to tantalise the peasants, who, hoping against hope, are now hurrying to garner their very unripe-looking harvest of wheat and barley, tearing it up by the roots. This, however, is the regular custom here, the soil being shaken back on to the field, and the roots used as fuel. These are very valuable on this great plain, where wood is so scarce that all fences are made of the reed-like stems of the millet, "lofty grain" the Chinese call it, and even the houses are built of millet-stems and mud.

I have been very much interested in watching these farmers preparing to carry home their crops in great carts, to which, by very long rope-traces, were harnessed various animals. In one, I noticed next the cart a small donkey; then ten feet ahead, two donkeys and a mule; ten feet further, two mules and a donkey!! I think such a team would rather astonish the driver of an English harvest-wain!

Tuesday, 17*th*.

The welcome much-prayed-for rain came on in the night in quite a real shower, and now the air is fresh and cool, and the boatmen are working with goodwill, as if they too were refreshed.

Wednesday, 18*th*.

We are lying moored to a mud-bank. Again the rain came on in the night, and this time in such good earnest that the crew have struck work, so they have made all as snug as they can, having shut up the house-cabin, and given it an extra big thatch of bamboo matting, and now they are indulging in a good long sleep, while the rain pours in torrents, accompanied by gusty wind. The change from the hitherto oppressive heat is extraordinary. There is now the raw cold feeling of a bleak Northumbrian day; it makes me feel quite chilly and inclined to sore throat.

Now that we have come to a standstill, there is no saying how long we may be detained here. I hope not very long, as I might thereby just miss the chance of a vessel direct from Tien-tsin to Japan, and I am most anxious to avoid the tediously circuitous route involved in returning by mail-steamer to Shanghai, thence to start afresh.

But if the rain goes on at this rate, the Pei-ho will soon be in flood, and then we may be washed away faster than we wish !

As a general rule, this boat-journey takes just about three days, but the time necessarily varies with the weather. Sometimes a dust-storm comes on with such violence that men cannot work, so it is necessary to lie still for hours, with every crevice closed as tight as possible.

Our commissariat arrangements are most amusing. Our boats are lashed together, and the food-supplies being all on board of Mr Collins's boat, he hands me breakfast and luncheon at the orthodox hours.

H.B.M. Consulate, Tien-tsin,
Thursday, 19*th*.

Yesterday evening the wind and rain abated, and we were able to proceed, the men continuing work till 11 P.M. Then heavy rain came on again. The morning was sweet and balmy, and all the willow-trees along the banks looked fresh and clean. Again I noticed with wonder the enormous supply of salt, made from sea-

water, and heaped up in great pyramids.[1] How it escapes being melted by the rain passes my comprehension!

About 10 A.M. we reached the outskirts of this city, passing beneath the ruins of the Roman Catholic cathedral. Then for two hours threaded our way through innumerable junks, till we reached the bund opposite this Consulate, where we find the Forrests in great anxiety at the non-arrival of the Shun Lee, with Sir Thomas Wade and several other friends on board. It was in this vessel that I travelled from Shanghai on her last trip. She is a splendid vessel, and always up to time, so that any delay gives rise to unpleasant surmises.

CHAPTER XLI.

FROM CHE-FOO TO NAGASAKI.

Wreck of the Shun Lee—Reach Che-foo—Difficulty of obtaining a passage—State call of a Chinese official—Testimonial boards—Straw-plaiting—Caged birds—On board the Thorkild—Coasting Corea—The Goto Isles—A dead calm—Almost on the breakers—Saved—A gale—Reach Nagasaki.

GULF OF PEH-CHI-LI,
ON BOARD THE TAKU,
June 20th.

WE started at 4.30 this morning, as the red sun was just rising. Captain M'Clure gave me a comfortable corner on the bridge, whence to watch the windings of the river, with all its aggravating twists and turns. All the country looks beautifully green after the rain—a wonderful change since I came up last month in the poor Shun Lee, of whose sad fate there is, alas! now no further doubt, for as we passed the Taku forts we received the grievous news that she is lying a total wreck off a promontory in this Gulf of Peh-chi-li. It seems that, though out to sea all lay clear, a heavy mist shrouded the land. A strong and unusual current drew the

[1] Besides the salt thus distilled from the sea, there are salt-wells in various parts of the empire, from which (the wells being deep and the openings small) the water is drawn up in long hollow bamboos, which are let down by a long rope coiled round a skeleton wheel, which is worked like a treadmill. The water obtained is emptied into a large pool, whence it passes through a rude filter into a lower pool, and is then transferred to great boilers, in which it eventually forms very large crystals of dazzling whiteness.

vessel out of her course, and there was also some error in reckoning, the result being that she ran right on to the rocks. Happily there was no great difficulty in getting ashore. The two hundred Chinese passengers were riotous, and insisted on being landed first, so this was done; and then the foreign passengers, numbering about a dozen, followed. They were all obliged to seek shelter in a filthy native hut swarming with vermin, and with only a shawl hung up as a partition to secure a separate corner for the ladies and children. Here they had to remain for about four days. Meanwhile native boats were procured, and all the luggage and cargo was saved—a wonderful mitigation of sorrow!

The refugees were not without some qualms as to personal safety, some bad cases of wrecking, or at least robberies of wrecked crews, having occurred last year on this part of the coast. Happily they were seen before long by a passing steamer on her way to Che-foo, so they were all carried off, bag and baggage, leaving the poor captain to mourn over the loss of his splendid vessel. We had such a pleasant voyage in her last month, that I quite feel as if I had lost a friend.

June 21st.

The Taku has just come to her moorings in Che-foo harbour, and we hear that there are two sailing-vessels about to start for Nagasaki, so that there will be no difficulty about my getting a direct passage. Of course, every one marvels at my caring to strike out a new line for myself, and abandon the luxuries of the regular passenger line for the chances of a trading vessel; but my recollection of my six weeks' cruise from Tahiti to San Francisco in a small schooner (240 tons) sustains me! Besides, having already sailed four times up and down the Woo Sung river, I have no wish to return to Shanghai for a fifth and sixth experience of its muddy waters!

ON BOARD THE DANISH BRIG THORKILD—155 tons!
Sunday Morning.

Already Che-foo lies far behind us, and I rejoice in having had sufficient resolution to carry out this plan, for besides the satisfaction of taking a short cut, there is far more of the feeling of real travelling in a little vessel like this than it is possible to attain to in a large well-appointed steamer, where life moves like clockwork, and passengers know no more of the real working of the ship than if they were in London.

And I am in amazing luck too, for this is a beautiful little brig, and thanks to the great courtesy of the kind Danish captain (who has resigned his own cabin to such an unwonted guest), I could not be more comfortable were I on a yacht of my own.

But, in truth, in leaving the Taku I ran a great risk of sharing the fate of the dog who dropped his bone for a shadow![1] For, having come ashore, bag and baggage, on the strength of the information first received, I was proceeding very leisurely to report myself at the Consulate, when I met the Consul himself, with a note to tell me that there was no chance of a direct passage! This was pleasant information! the Taku being by this time far away.

However, as I could by no means believe that my luck had so entirely failed me, I proceeded to interview the shipping agents, with the happy result that though both vessels refused to carry passengers, the Danish agent no sooner realised that the applicant was a lady who had sailed in many waters, and knew how to make light of difficulties, than he agreed to make arrangements for my reception, and the good captain promised to do all in his power to make my journey pleasant and comfortable.

It was accordingly agreed that I should go on board last night, and in the interval I saw as much as possible of Che-foo and its surroundings, thanks to the kindness of Mrs Gardner, who invited me to luncheon at the Consulate; immediately after which, the Tautai of Che-foo came in great state to call on the Consul, in a fine sedan-chair with eight bearers, and a guard of soldiers dressed in scarlet. (I had learnt in Peking to appreciate the concentrated essence of grandeur conveyed by those eight bearers!) There were also a train of attendants, some carrying an elaborate smoking apparatus, others a large pewter teapot, and a great red box supposed to contain ample provisions for a couple of days, in case the great man should at any moment hear news which would necessitate his going off to some distant point. Of course his visit had been heralded by the despatch of a huge Chinese visiting-card, which is simply a slip of crimson paper about fourteen inches by five, on which the name is inscribed in black characters.

The Consul showed me three bright blue-and-gold boards which have been sent to him by Chinese officials, to be presented to a sea-captain who has saved some Chinamen from drowning. They bear in golden characters an inscription with very flowery poetic praises of his deeds. I am told that such boards as these are

[1] Though I chose to ignore it, and trust to my luck, I ran a far greater risk of having to travel with very undesirable companions.

presented by the Emperor to reward faithful servants, and they are suspended from the roof of the official hall, and there treasured for generations.

Captain Douglas, H.M.S. Egeria, and Captain Tudor, H.M.S. Swinger, dropped in to tea. Of course the fate of the poor Shun Lee and my own chances of a fair voyage were fruitful topics of discussion. Certainly "my yacht" is rather a nutshell in point of tonnage, but with the great steamer now lying shattered on the rocks, it is very evident that the Goliaths of the ocean are not always the most to be relied upon!

Afterwards we started to call at the London Mission, two miles from the town, so we were carried in chairs by a very pretty road, along the fields where the harvesters were busily at work, pulling up wheat by the roots, and tying it in "stooks" like our own. Here, as on the Pei-ho, the roots are cut off for fuel, and the straw is saved for plaiting, which is the great industry of Che-foo, the amount of straw-plaiting annually exported from here to England being almost incredible. On the other hand, the imports from Europe to this port are so large, that immense caravans of mules and donkeys laden with goods start daily for the interior.

I have already repeatedly noticed the friendly way in which Chinamen carry out their pet singing-birds, either tied to a stick or in a small cage. Here this custom seems specially prevalent, for I saw large parties of most respectable-looking burghers meeting at various resting-places under pleasant shady trees, each carrying his cage of pets for an afternoon's airing!

Larks seem to be the general favourites, but some men have a kind of thrush which can imitate all manner of sounds, cries of divers animals, and notes of birds, something like the mocking-bird. They are tended with the greatest care, and their value increases with their years, so that Chinese reverence for old age is not confined to human beings!

In the evening, finding that the vessel was not to sail till eight this morning, Mrs Gardner very kindly gave me a bed at the Consulate, and a pleasant early breakfast in a bright room looking out on a sunny garden fragrant with mignonette and other familiar flowers, and with the blue sea beyond. What a contrast to a home in Peking!

Then the Consul brought me on board in his own boat, and committed me to the good care of Captain Baade, a blue-eyed, fair-haired Dane, who hails from Sonderburg, just the man you would expect to own the Thorkild—delightful name, savouring of old

Norse mythology and adventure! and such a dear little vessel, beautifully clean and well appointed.

We worked slowly to the mouth of the harbour, then a fresh light breeze sprang up, and we sped on our way past rocky isles, and now Che-foo and its grand headland of cliffs lies far behind. With favouring gales we may possibly reach Nagasaki in three days, but we have to count on the probability of a week. No great hardship, however, in such a nice little ship!

Sunday, 29th.

A whole week has slipped by, and still we are far from our journey's end. It has been a very peaceful quiet week, but light head-winds have made our progress slow indeed, and sometimes cold mists have blotted out all the wondrous ultramarine blue of the sea which we call "Yellow."

Not one sail have we sighted in these seven days; but when the mist was most dense, and a brooding silence which we could almost feel seemed to rest upon the waters, a large skeleton junk floated noiselessly close past us, its great black ribs looking weird and spirit-like, like one of Gustave Doré's strange fancies. There could be little doubt that all her crew had perished,—at all events, no living thing remained on her. Had we struck her in the night we should inevitably have foundered, so we inferred that our good angels had been faithful watchers.

I find my companions chivalrously courteous, as becomes the family of the Thorkild. They consist of the kind-hearted captain, and a crew of half-a-dozen Danish lads brought from his own home in Sonderburg. The mate is German, with a strong dash of California. Janssen, the boatswain, is a gentle fair-haired Dane, wearing ear-rings after the manner of sailors.

No born gentlemen could be more courteous and considerate than these are, one and all. It is quite a pleasure to have fallen in with what is to me a new type; and it is quite refreshing to hear them talk of their homes, their German and Danish village life, so pleasant and so very simple, and so full of kindness and music, and the natural way in which it all seems to centre round the village church and its festivals.

These men read much, and have been on the seaboard of many lands, and always keenly observant.

The steward and cook are Chinamen, and the food is abundant and good of its kind; though I confess that the strange sweet soups, in which preserved fruits and plums figure so largely, and

which find such favour with my companions, are to me somewhat trying!

The weather has been so calm that I have been able to work quietly at my painting; and my good captain has given me most useful lessons in the Danish method of darning stockings, as practised by all the women of Sonderburg, while the mate has painted all the waterproof covers of my portfolios.

There has been little to mark the days, save such incidents as catching a large albicore—a great fish of about fifty pounds weight, and of a bright golden-green colour. The bait was only a bit of rag, which he doubtlessly mistook for a cuttle-fish, several of which he had just swallowed whole. Its flesh proved firm and good, and gave all on board a good dinner of fresh fish; but I think its dying cry must have given warning to all the finny tribes, for we have never had another bite from great fish or small, though we anxiously set our baited lines each morning. The sea-gulls must be more expert fishers, for they never forsake us, hovering around on swift wing, or floating on the smooth waters, wherever a school of whales are disporting themselves, doubtless sharing in the feast which has attracted these mighty monsters of the deep.

In these seven days we have only sighted land once—namely, the Isle Modeste, which I believe to be the most northerly of the Corean group. Yesterday we coasted the north shore of Quelpart, the most southerly of the group. It is apparently a great volcanic cone, richly wooded round the broken edges of the crater, thence descending to the sea in very smooth slopes, and all under most careful cultivation. Not a valley, or gorge, or watercourse could we discern, but many small, very green, conical hillocks, like fairy knolls. As soon as we got under lee of the isle the breeze failed us, and we were becalmed for the night, not a very desirable position, with an inhospitable shore on one side, and rocky islets on the other! We could distinguish many villages, but were nowise tempted to land, knowing the marked unfriendliness of all the Coreans to strangers.

The Thorkild has, however, been able to do her part in mitigating this antipathy, having on her last voyage picked up a party of fourteen shipwrecked Coreans floating helplessly on their poor little battered junk at a distance of twenty-five miles from land. As she neared them, they all knelt, as if craving the assistance of which they stood so seriously in need; for here they had been floating for many days, with no food but a little uncooked rice. One of them was evidently an official of some importance. Of

course, they were treated with all possible kindness, and carried on to Nagasaki, where an interpreter was found who could speak Corean; and thence they were sent home with all honour by the Japanese Government, who never lose a chance of endeavouring to conciliate these unfriendly neighbours.

Tuesday, July 1st.

"Mair haste, less speed!" and "The shortest cut, the longest way home," are proverbs which very naturally come unbidden to my mind. We certainly are making a long trip this time! Seventeen days of incessant travelling since we left Peking, ten of which we have been on board this wee ship! And the poor captain is losing money by every hour's delay.

Last night, just before midnight, we sighted the Goto Isles, an outlying group of Japan. Here the Yellow Sea became bluer than ever. I can only compare it to liquid ultramarine, but clear as crystal. I sat on deck till midnight, and watched the golden moon slowly sink in the Corean Straits. Then came a downpour of rain just to remind us that we were nearing the green shores of Japan.

Wednesday, 2d.

We are still beating to and fro off the Goto Isles, making long tacks but little progress. In these two days we have run fully two hundred miles, and have not made ten, for the wind always heads us whichever way we turn. What chiefly impresses me during these wearisome long tacks is the remarkable sameness of isles seen from the sea at a little distance. There are flat isles and mountainous isles, but I doubt whether even a geologist could often tell one group from another at a moderate distance. Bute and Arran, Skye and Ross-shire, Argyle and the Isles, Fiji, Tonga, Samoa, Hawaii, Japan, Goto, Corea—there's a wonderful resemblance among them all!

These Goto Isles, however, are unusually beautiful, and to-day we have had a good opportunity of judging, as we have been for about twelve hours running very slowly along the shores of Fukuye, the largest southern isle of the group. It is a beautiful coast, with high volcanic mountains, very green, covered with rich vegetation of the careful sort so peculiar to Japan, and intermingled with scattered woods. All along the coast lie groups of very varied isles, some low and flat, with grassy shores, others precipitous, crowned with the picturesque fir-trees which form so striking a

feature in all parts of Japan. This morning we passed a richly wooded headland with a lighthouse on the verge of a sheer precipice. This evening it is still in sight, and we are stealing along with a very light breeze, hoping to pass out before sunset between Aka and Ki, two groups of jagged rocky isles. But the breeze is so light and so variable that there's no saying whether we can manage this, for literally whichever way we tack, the wind, such as it is, turns and heads us!

Now it seems inclined to turn to a dead calm, in which case we shall drift right out to sea again, and perhaps find ourselves on the shores of Manchuria! That would at least be a new experience! But really it is too absurd to think that we are only fifty miles from Nagasaki (and my budget of letters), and yet have no chance of getting there to-night.

At Sunset.

The breeze has failed us altogether and we are lying helpless, but we are not drifting across to Manchuria—we only wish we were! for, while a high sea and no wind render the ship unmanageable, we are quietly drifting into a narrow passage between the two very dangerous groups of rocky isles which now lie right before us to right and left.

The sun has just gone down in living glory, and the rocks and mountains are still bathed in hues of lilac and green and gold; a faint breath of air just stirs our sails in the most tantalising way.

The sea, though calm in one sense, is running inshore in mighty rollers, which dash with resistless fury on the outlying rocks, and we are at the mercy of their current, for the water is so deep as to be unfathomable. So we cannot anchor, and even if the crew took the one wee boatie and tried to row us seaward, their puny strength could avail nothing against the might of the rollers, and the powerful attraction of the land. So these fine fellows are sitting very still and watching anxiously to see what turn matters will take.

The currents are quite uncertain, and unless we can keep just in the middle, the good little brig will inevitably finish her career on one group or the other. It is just the turn of a feather whether we get through or not, and the captain and mate do not attempt to conceal their anxiety.

Luckily there's full moonlight just now, so we shall at least see where we are going (only that distances are so very deceptive in the moonlight). Well, if we do get ashore, there's the comfort of

knowing that the inhabitants are kindly Japanese, and I'll see an island which perhaps no European has yet explored! If we don't, —why, then, I am afraid this letter and its writer will find their way into the maw of some voracious shark, and I devoutly hope that we shall disagree with him! . . .

July 4th.

A lovely clear sunrise, and the beautiful Goto Isles lying well behind us at a safe distance! for which we most devoutly say, Thank Heaven! For never since the night when we lay in the Hindoo off the Eddystone rocks in a howling tempest, with our rudder-gear gone, and the water within seven inches of our upper fires,[1] have I been in such imminent peril as last night, when in a most peaceful calm, and this good little ship in perfect order, with every sail set (looking so white and pretty in the brilliant light of a full moon), we were helplessly and apparently hopelessly drifting straight on to the cruel rocks, carried in by the huge oily rollers, which form the dreaded breakers, the roar of which still sounds in my ear, and the flash of their white spray seems to glitter before my eyes.

If you have a good map of Japan, you can see exactly where we were. Off Fukuye lie the two little groups of rocky islets, and behind them lies Tawo Bay, closed in by Kuro, a very high green isle, rock-girt. Just at sunset we drifted into the straits between Aka and Ki, and though a little breath of wind encouraged us to steer seaward, the great rollers came on with such force that the brig could make no way at all.

The full moon shone gloriously, and the white sails gleamed as if inviting the breeze that would not come, and all the time we were drifting ever nearer and nearer to inevitable destruction. By 10 P.M. we were close on Kuro, on whose rock-bound shore the rollers dashed in heavy breakers, the spray flashing in dazzling light. My recollections of the appalling force of the breakers on Fijian coral-reefs, and of wholesale clearance of wrecked canoes by sharks, had impressed me with a very wholesome reverence for breakers in general, especially such as we know to be in shark-haunted waters!

It was a most lovely night—I had almost said "clear as day," only that moonlight makes it impossible to judge accurately of distances. But one thing was evident—namely, that we were apparently within a few minutes of certain wreck, each moment

[1] See 'Via Cornwall to Egypt,' p. 25. C. F. Gordon Cumming. Chatto & Windus.

drifting us nearer and nearer to the cruel rocks, while the thunderous roar of the breakers became more deafening, and their gleaming white light more vivid.

It was evidently a mere question of minutes, so the captain decided that the moment had come when he must abandon his ship, as there was nothing to be gained by waiting till she struck —on the contrary, it would be incurring very unnecessary danger.

So he gave orders for the one little boat to be made ready, while we rapidly stowed our most precious goods into the smallest possible space, the captain and his Chinese boy cramming ship's papers, clothes, and dollars into a canvas bag, while I routed the chief treasures from the depths of my carefully packed boxes, and thought with dire regret of the many pleasant associations of far-distant lands, interwoven with the heterogeneous piles of every conceivable article which lay scattered around—so soon to become the sport of the waves.

This done, we were ready to face the worst, and returned on deck, all the better for this little exertion. For it must have been trying indeed to these "hardy Norsemen," who would have been in their element battling with a storm, to have to sit still on this beautiful calm midsummer evening, utterly helpless, watching their good ship drift to her inevitable doom. In the few moments we had been in the cabin we had sensibly approached the land, which now loomed high before us, and the dull roar of the breakers sounded more ominous than ever.

The order to lower the little boat was given, and in another minute we should have been on board of her. But, as the old saying goes, "Man's extremity is God's opportunity," and at the very last moment—when we had drifted so close to the white crests of the huge curling green waves, that it seemed as if nothing could save the vessel from being dashed on the rampart of pitiless black rocks, and when the awful tumult and crash of falling breaking billows sounded full in our deafened ears (not a continuous sound, like the raging of a tempest, but an intermittent booming like thunder-claps, with momentary intervals of almost stillness, which seemed to accentuate the roar and echo that followed), suddenly, when all possibility of salvation appeared to be over, a faint little puff of wind caught the sails, then another and another, and soon a fresh and blessed breeze sprang up, wafted us away from the beautiful treacherous shore, and in less than an hour we were clear of the group, and thankfully watched the receding isles as we sat on deck enjoying the hot coffee which was so rapidly produced

by the cool and collected Chinese cook, and rejoicing that we had not been compelled to throw ourselves on the hospitality of the kindly inhabitants of Fukuye. For though we knew how cordially they would have welcomed us, and how much of beauty and of interest we should have found on their isle, so rarely visited by any European, we were content, under the circumstances, to resign these privileges! Much as I enjoy new experiences in general, I am truly glad to have been spared this one!

After a while I turned in, as the sailors say; but the roar of the breakers so haunted my waking dreams that I stole on deck once more, and sat in the soft lovely moonlight watching the beautiful Goto group till their outline became pale and dim on the far horizon. I was much gratified by the hearty and honest manner in which my comrades expressed their gratification at the coolness with which I had faced our prospects. I believe they imagined that women under such circumstances must necessarily be helpless encumbrances, so it was pleasant to have helped to dispel that illusion. Indeed I am thankful to say that that sort of physical fear is a sensation which I have never experienced (except in the creepy feeling that comes over one sitting up late at night in ghostly old houses with vague dark corners—or in any house, with the blinds up, and the impression that some one may be looking in—possibly a burglar!) But in the real work of life, I feel that it is all fish that comes to the net, and it is far easier to be cool than to get fussed.

At all events, owning such family mottoes as "Courage" and "Sans crainte," I should be ashamed to disgrace them! And really last night I doubt if there would have been much danger to life.

Certainly, last autumn, a fine English brig, the Star Queen, was driven on to these rocks, and out of thirty-three persons on board, twenty-two were drowned. But that was on a dark night, and they could not see where they were going.[1]

But the perversity of winds and currents, and the consequent danger of navigation hereabouts, has long been fully recognised by Chinese traders, whose unwieldy junks are often imperilled in these waters, inspiring certain native verses to the effect that—

"Goodly are the wares of Nipon,
But the Isles of Goto are hard to pass"—

a statement which we are quite able to indorse!

[1] Strange to say, the beautiful little schooner Paloma, which brought me so safely from Tahiti to San Francisco, was soon afterwards wrecked in a precisely similar manner, having been drifted on rocks by heavy rollers in a sudden calm.

H.M.B. Consulate, Nagasaki,
July 5th, Saturday.

After all, my hardy Norsemen did have a chance of distinguishing themselves in a real tearing gale. Tuesday morning was a dream of calm loveliness. The beautiful isles of Southern Japan lay all around us, and we hoped ere sunset to be safely anchored in our desired haven, when suddenly down swept a white squall, hiding all the isles. Another moment and we were enfolded in cold eerie mist, and the sea, which had been like liquid ultramarine, became weary and grey—the barometer falling fast. Nothing could we see but a stormy grey sky, and a weary expanse of grey waves. It rose to the dignity of a severe gale, and all night our good little ship rolled and tossed like a nutshell, sometimes lying over at such an angle that it seemed impossible she could right again. Towards morning the storm abated; but grey sheets of rain poured pitilessly, and we could not tell how far we might have drifted in the night.

Suddenly there came a break in the mist, revealing the island of Tagoshima, and the smoke and shafts of its coal-mines, while to the left lay the lighthouse, which marks the entrance of Nagasaki harbour—a long narrow bay, with grand rocky headlands, and still, clear inlets; isles of infinitely varied form displaying every shade of exquisite green-terraced fields, with rich crops of millet or maize, and the vivid green of the young rice; dark clumps of most picturesque old fir-trees, or groves of delicate airy bamboo with feathery foliage, and tidy little Japanese villages and graves dotted about in every direction.

Never had this most beautiful sail seemed to me so lovely as now in contrast with the dreary scene of yesterday.

A light breeze blew us cheerily up the harbour, and our brave little vessel flew to her anchorage in such gallant style as to win special commendation from the captain of H.M.S. Growler, which lay hard by.

A note to the Consul announcing my eccentric arrival very quickly brought Mr Troup in person to welcome me back, and an hour later I was cosily at rest in this pleasant English home, whence we look across gay garden blossoms down through a frame of the greenest and loveliest bamboos, to the blue harbour below, where lies the little Thorkild, which has brought me so safely through many dangers back to this green paradise.

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